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In the Margin

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Philip Larkin Laurence Lerner
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and a story by Tom Paulin

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London–Paris
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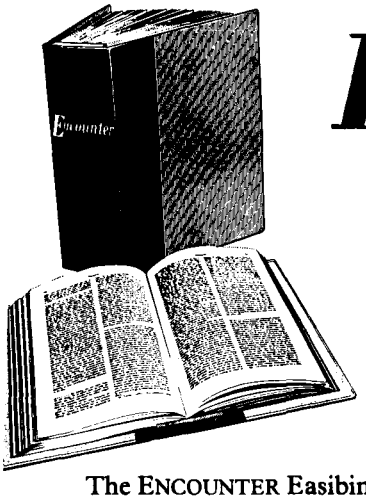

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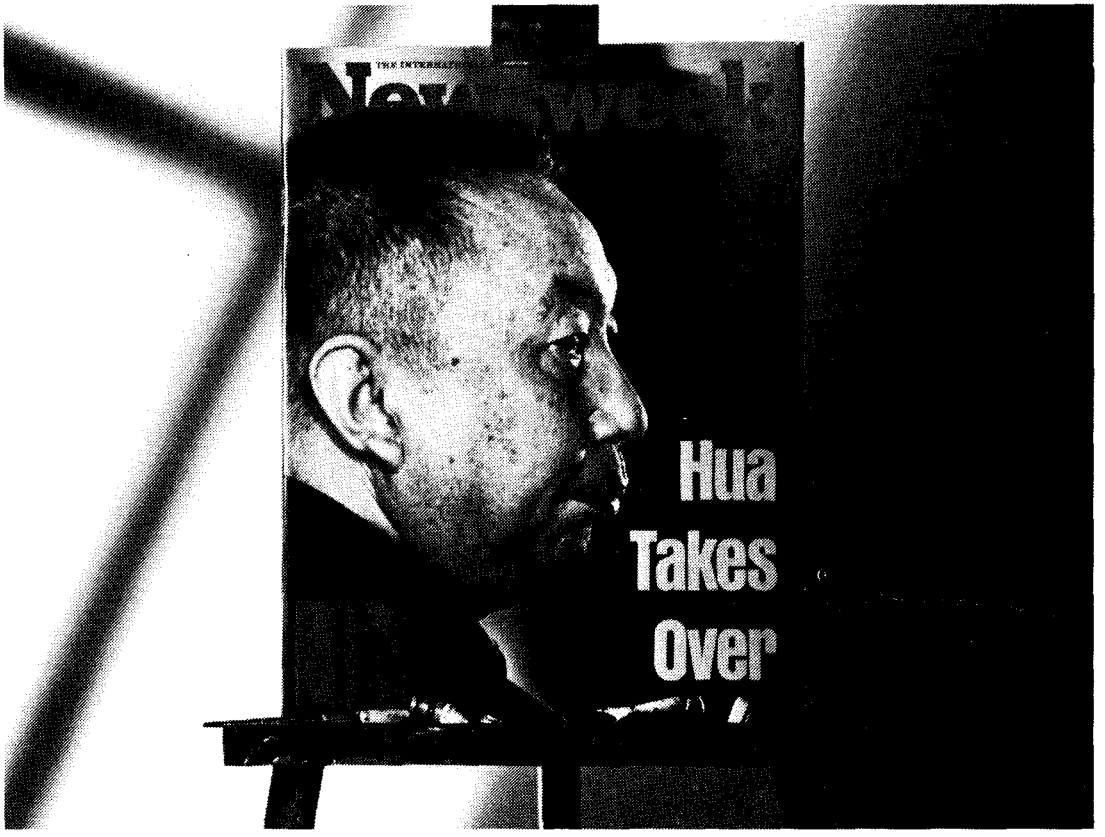

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Tom Paulin

Sleep, Twice Over, Begin

AN OLD MAN LOOKS at the river that runs through his estate. He walks stiffly as though the stinging pains he feels in his abdomen are traps hidden in the wet grass. Drops of dew scatter and glisten as he moves. The still peaty water in Natty's Pool softens the chill sunlight and in the fresh silence there is a raw yolky sound of birdsong. It is clear and early and he sees a brown hare against the long grass. It is watching him and he catches the shy wildness in its eye. Then the lazy mowing of a light aircraft passes slowly over the beech trees and when he looks again the hare has gone.

He walks back across the lawns and his chauffeur brings a black official car round from the stables. He imagines it being driven back empty to the capital, a hearse without a coffin. In his study he unlocks the second drawer of his desk and takes out a broad leather diary. *Audience yesterday. Text Agreed. Announcement Today.*

As the car turns out on to the Enniskillen road he sits back against its red upholstery and chuckles to himself. Then he turns to his wife and nods his head at the driver's impassive back. It seems to them both that they are playing a trick on a trusted servant for whom this day is no different from yesterday. The car sleeks through the valley of the generals.

In his office he buzzes his private secretary.

A word in your ear, James.

Then he whispers it.

Telephones ring and whispers pass. The Press Corps is summoned and then it seems that he has said what everyone is thinking.

A LONG NOISY ROOM with a farmhouse clock in a red sandstone building near the centre of town. The rap of typewriter keys on hard platens arguing with the drilling ring of telephones.

Pod?

Yeah?

Sorry, someone pulled the switch. Can you do it?

Sure.

Have you the time but?

Course I have.

Caught us on the hop he did.

No matter. OK?

See you, Pod.

See you, Erny.

Pod searches in the files for the old man's most distinguished moments. He is not surprised when he fails to find them. As he notes dates and phrases he feels thirsty. He glances at the seed merchant's clock. The minute hand blinks above his dearth of copy. He frowns and sits back in his chair and then he smiles as though the sun is shining in his eyes. He is a soft flabby man with a double chin, spectacles and furzy hair. His smile is kindly and apparently absent-minded so that he appears amiably detached from his own vigilance. His tweed jacket smells of tobacco. Underneath it he wears a grey woollen cardigan with brown leather buttons. There is an open packet of Gallaher's Blues on his desk, a calendar, typewriter and a ring jotter with some notes in ballpoint. A girl brings him a mug of tea and he grunts. She glances back over her shoulder at him—a long-legged girl with fresh cheeks looking at a slack paunchy humorous man.

HE CHUCKLED to himself. After the hard winter this was better than any spring. The old dozer, gone at last! I never thought I'd see the day. People must be looking round and

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rubbing their eyes—I hoke a speck of gunge out of mine and feel better. Not that this office looks any different—I'd bet on the same cold wind from the Lough cutting down High Street. And the old man humping his sandwich-board outside the City Hall. *Ye Shall All Appear Before The Judgment Seat Of Christ.* But I'm not called upon to pass judgment—I've just to hack the sort of speech that goes with a gold watch and present it on behalf of the Board. The colonels and captains of the linen trade expect Pod to do his duty. And my conscience rests easy enough these days—when it curses and posts one of its nut letters (*Sinner Beware, Thy Damnation Slumbereth Not,* signed, *Christian, Magherafelt*) I stop my eyes and ears. I mean, how long would it take three brass monkeys at three typewriters to hammer out the truth? Don't ask me. What I know can't be printed. It slips out in the dark corner of a certain bar near here. A form of gossip that makes nothing happen. Only think of the parasites that lodge in the scales of fish and say this—you can be grubby and pure at the same time. Opinion is shaped already, it's set like those buildings out there—the cathedral, the customs house, the law courts—and there's damn all the likes of me can do about it. But there are times when I turn out of High Street and see some faded letters above a row of dusty windows. It's then I feel the difference—*The Northern Whig*, where I worked before the war, has slipped out with the tide.

How can I launch this obituary on the living? For it's only his public carapace he's shed. Behold me for I groan among the fossil record. The list of records he established! For longevity in office, for sheer inertia and unbroken slumber, he takes the ship's biscuit. You would hardly believe it. But you'd better shut it, Pod. The oily captains are breathing down your neck and it's not worth the risk. Let Pod stay the way he is—cuddly and harmless and good company. To have a sagged chin and a corporation, to relish a pint of Double with a plate of steak and chips, to gossip the day away and not believe in God or Anyone very much, to read biographies of a winter's evening and walk through absence in the spring . . . is to vote Labour and have no ambitions. Ah, my few poor loves are secret and long gone. I live alone and have hurt no one—that's the only ambition I've kept to. I spin yarns, people summon me to dinner parties and laugh at my jokes, for dear old Pod can be most terribly witty about personation, planning permission, a certain love-nest near Stranorlar. All the secrets of the body politic crawl my way sooner or later. And if I buy a new hat, a pair of shoes, order a drink or glance out of the window at the mill opposite—any of these will make a piece. Thrice a week I'm *On Spec,* turning everything and nothing into copy. Such as Why I'll Never Drive A Car. Or like yesterday when I left Slowey's and walked back through Cornmarket. I had the story of the new hat all ready to bounce out on the keys today. Such as, my bewareness of a sudden chill now I'm left with only a teenager's ration of the three score and ten. School cap, duncher, hard hat, topper, even a steel helmet once—I flow from one to the other. Next time I buy a pair of shoes I'll tell the province about mutton dummies in Tiger's Bay, how my toes waggled through my brother's cast-offs. And yesterday, with my head confirmed within a stiff felt circle. I walked from Cornmarket towards that haunt of journalists, artists, folk singers and bores not fifty yards from this office. I wish I was there now. But the boul Pod is absent and at work. His mouth is dry and there's a windiness in his bowels . . . words, words, but not the Word. Soft eejit, begin.

WHEN ASKED BY Sir James Craig to become Senator: "I was not at all keen." Title's a doddle, then. *The Reluctant Politician.* "When you are a trained soldier and asked etc, you don't reason why."

Vigilantes with official blessing. Indeed a veteran—plenty of them around, so here's another—of those heady days recalls—family mansion, distrib. centre guns, smuggled into country aboard *Clyde Valley* & sundry other vessels.

"Politics never a tradition in my family." Pull the other one. Felt it his duty accept. Of course he did. A keen angler. Eldest son killed after Normandy landings. Remember the photo: the stretcher with his body lashed to an armoured car. Like a Roman funeral. Nope, Erny'll cut the adjective, so drop the whole thing.

Undoubtedly his greatest contribution lay in

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the field of agriculture. Field always gets past, and anyway I'm done with pride.

He had not a single Roman Catholic about his own place. He would therefore appeal to Loyalists, wherever possible, to ensure they employed good Protestant lads and lassies. Lovely one that, but sure as hell to get cut—why waste time?

Able mix freely all sections of the community, gruff sense, charm, military language much appreciated. Just think of the smile in those narrow canny farmer's eyes. Like a cross between a stovepipe and a Chinese warlord. The Ancient of Days.

Proposal restrict family allowance small families. He didn't get away with that one. They called the tune across the water.

Angered by coercion. Much to safeguard. Bulwark. No Surrender. Fuck them all.

"If we are called inflexible this shows that our principles are not elastic." Brilliant.

Dry Dock Debate Postponed. As much at home with Kings & Queens as with farmers of Fermanagh.

Joseph Stewart, leader Nats, unavailable for comment. Pity about the unemployment.

His connection with Special Constabulary—forged, no, first began. But a counterfeiter for sure.

March 3rd, Sir Ian Fraser slit him open and repaired hernia & ulcers. My turn now to stuff him full of old clippings and embalm him with a smarmy fluency. Like Pharaoh in the pyramids.

March 16th, Lady B waits factory stack be demolished. Wouldn't budge, fell later, five men nearly crushed. Same day, Gough of the Curragh dies at 92 and Sir Winston leaves for Riviera.

March 19th, routine audience with Governor at Hillsborough. Ho, ho, no one spotted that. Erny where were you? Same night Capt. T. O'Neill abs. distinguished gathering at Town Hall, Newtownards. Bets, bets. Capt. W. J. Long assured assembled company his business due pressing matter of State.

Now the State has weighed and clicked I must add my lick of paint. Dob, Dob, Pod will do his lazy best. For the captains, gentlemen and all the decent wee people (last Sunday the Brigadier walking his dog along the towpath at Shaw's Bridge—with hindsight he looked thoughtful).

"A fearless man and a great man in history." Government objects—secretary's statement of yesterday pm—plan new Carerras factory Andersonstown. Ministry of Commerce "desire spread industry more evenly through the province." For the butter shall be spread in certain places.

TAP AWAY, wee hammers. Set your gloss upon the facts.

The Reluctant Politician

Lord Brookeborough, Prime Minister of Ulster for almost twenty years, today announced his retirement from active politics. At 75, Lord Brookeborough has been Ulster's longest serving Prime Minister. Taking over the reins of government from Mr J. M. Andrews on May 3rd, 1943, he has held office for 19 years, 10 months and 22 days. He has also established a UK record for holding government office continuously for more than 33 years. His connection with the Ulster Special Constabulary—first begun in the 1920s—may be said to have determined his future as a public figure, for in revealing his sterling strength of character and his undoubted gift for firm leadership it started him on the path of a distinguished career that eventually bore fruit in his appointment as Prime Minister of Northern Ireland. He was a staunch member of the Orange Order, and it was at the July demonstration in 1947 in Belfast that he was presented with a sash which is carefully preserved as a family heirloom.

Born in 1888 and educated at Winchester and Sandhurst, Sir Basil Brooke had his first experience of Ulster politics as a young officer of 25. It was 1913 and his family and friends were solidly behind Carson and the Ulster Volunteer Force. Indeed, a veteran of those heady days recalls how the family mansion was a distribution centre for guns which had been smuggled into the country aboard the *Clyde Valley* and sundry other vessels. Though a serving soldier and hence under orders to hold aloof from the political arena, Lord Brookeborough nevertheless put his shoulder to the wheel and lent his assistance in the training of a private armed force known locally as "Trimble's Horse." After serving in the Great War, and on

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returning to Ulster to farm, he was angered by the coercion of Loyalists by the IRA, and it was then that he formed a body of vigilantes that was the starting-point of the "B" Specials, a force with which his name will be always associated. Being asked by Sir James Craig to take a seat in the Senate, he said, "I was not at all keen, but when you are a trained soldier and asked to undertake certain jobs, you don't question the reason why."

Undoubtedly, his greatest contribution to Ulster may be said to lie in the field of agriculture and in his negotiations with Clement Attlee which made Ulster's constitutional position secure. Always popular and able to mix freely with all sections of the community, Lord Brookeborough's gruff sense of humour, ready charm and military language were much appreciated by all and sundry. In the last few months, although troubled physically, he fought his critics with characteristic verve and determination. But now that the die is cast he can be sure to quote one of his favourite Fermanagh philosophies "Them things be's" and to rest honoured and content upon his laurels. "A fearless man and a great man in history" was one tribute paid to him at Stormont yesterday. This assessment of a politician who was never lacking in the common touch and who would have been well contented to remain a country gentleman is not likely to be altered by the passage of time.

THE DEED is done. Blowaway to your mornings of egg yolks and crumbs. Firelighters, chip wrappers, wipers in backyard bogs. Stuff only the constipated might read twice. My stomach glumps and rumbles. A late sandwich in that well-known haunt is called for. Yesterday I consumed a late sandwich, sandwich so called, dear readers, after the Earl of Sandwich who in 17-whatever gave his name to this handy snack while playing whist aboard HMS *Victory*, *The Fighting Temeraire* or some such gallant four-master anchored off Portsmouth. Aye, I'll taste that future sandwich twice over and boke it up again. Stray tastes and instant oblivions. Twice over it might be *The Pick of Pod or On Spec in Ulster*, price 10/6. A signing session in Mullan's. For there's something brushes me like a wing, like air, just now—one paper hoop after another, I'm fired through them all. Till I see someone reading my words. I'm lying in the family plot, ho ho, in Knockbreda, but I'm cute enough to know it isn't for the run of the words he's looking. Nor for me neither. Pod has popped it and this cold-eyed fella doesn't care about his decent little wisdoms. But he's been made to look them out (and wasn't I made to write them?). "Tame liberal circa 1963" is how he tags them. And he scans what I'm after tapping out under the clock in this close office. Parched, hungry and a bit annoyed—someone'll have nabbed my stool by the time I'm through. But let me pray he's just the figment of my dozy hunger. Those who want will read between my arse-licking lines—the unbroken years, sly sash, Trimble's Horse, rifles in the mansion. Let them guess what I could not dare to say. But after tomorrow I pray to nothing that no one will uncover them. Sleep, old bastard.

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Joachim Fest

Richard Wagner

A Sketch drawn from Cosima's Diaries

WE ARE ONLY NOW beginning to rediscover the peculiar greatness of the 19th century, which for so long has had the reputation of being a vulgar epoch addicted to the worship of great men. From the distance of several generations it now appears far more complex, far more colourful than was generally held, but also more accessible to us. It is not so much the boundless energy of the century which makes it so attractive in retrospect; nor its sense of its own importance, which led it to plan everything on a lavish, monumental scale often to the point of monstrosity, yet which also led it into adventures, both imaginary and real, almost unprecedented in history: the last epoch of naive conquests and innocent utopias. It is much rather the darker shadows in the generally sunny landscape of that century which bring it closer to the modern observer, the voices of unrest, anxiety, and foreboding which are unmistakably to be heard above the continual drone of optimism. It was both great and sick at the same time.

No one exemplified the ambivalence of this epoch as clearly as Richard Wagner. And just as the attraction which his age is once more exerting always contains an element of irritation, our view of his personality is likewise clouded by deep misgivings. This epoch's simple faith in the future, but also its apocalyptic moods, its reactionary nature and its inclination towards world destruction under the flag of revolution, its grand bourgeois ethos and middle-class normality, its fustian seriousness and madcap scheming, its grudges and its great freedom of judgment: all these opposites met in him. With all his contradictions he sometimes seems like the unnatural product of a petulant moment of anthropology, and yet, for all these incompatible aspects, by no means disparate but integrated by an elemental personality which rudely unites all the fragments.

But it was not only the contradictions of the epoch which this man, with his genius for adaption, seized upon and amalgamated. These were further complicated by the eccentric pathology of an artist, highly contradictory in its own right, which always intensified, broke up, or gave a provocative slant to whatever it assimilated. And it has been precisely the scarcely penetrable tangle of connections resulting from all this which has embarrassed the decoding propensity of biographers for so long. Significantly, up until now there has been no adequate presentation of Richard Wagner which has plausibly interpreted the abundant material, and only in a few essays, above all by Thomas Mann,[1] do we find an awareness of his problematic status.

The contemporary relevance of the 19th century manifests itself in the passionate controversies that Richard Wagner still inspires. They go far beyond the arguments about his work and personality and encompass fundamental ideological positions which are still current today. What were subsequently revealed to be divergent tendencies are still united in him, even if they are unreconciled. He marks the basic contradiction to which all moral/political antagonisms since that time can be traced back one way or another: between enlightenment, emancipation as well as commitment to

JOACHIM FEST *is a German historian, author of "The Face of the Third Reich" (1970) and "Hitler" (1974), both published by Weidenfeld. He has for the past few years been a senior editor of the "Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung."*

[1] "Sufferings and Greatness of Richard Wagner" and "Richard Wagner and *The Ring*" in Thomas Mann, *Past Masters and Other Papers* (Secker, 1933) and *Essays of Three Decades* (Penguin ed., 1947).

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world progress and change on the one hand, and the demand for the familiar shape of existence on the other; between a future of increasing sobriety and a mythologically enchanted image of the past; between the modern and the romantic spirit.

It is a contradiction that dominates practically every page of Cosima Wagner's diaries.[2] Without the revolutionary experience of 1848, Wagner once asserted, he could hardly have conceived *The Ring*—but at the same time he indulged in tirades against the Paris Commune, the emancipation of women, or the Parliamentary system. The Law should be laid down, and then upheld by the Army, he observed in cheerful disdain of all rights of political co-determination, and takes Bismarck to task for not adopting the deprecating tone "that is befitting (*der sich gehöre*)" with the "parliamentary asses." The Bayreuth Festival, he declared, was intended to be an event for the People—but he was so offended by the faces of the people that he met on his walks that on one occasion he actually turned back disgruntled. Again and again he speaks of his hopes for America as the ideal of strong unencumbered modernity, and toys for years with the idea of emigrating—while simultaneously voicing his hatred for civilisation, machines, cities, and money. He longed for the future and was overwhelmed by dread of its approach. Great men have never been on the side of progress, he said, but "have reached out for a lost paradise, have looked back longingly . . . ."

Contradictions ultimately also shaped his conception of his historical role. Paramount was the feeling of enormous alienation, of being profoundly misunderstood even by his friends and by his numerous devotees. As "the sum total" of his life, he observed in August 1871, he was filled with the feeling of "standing on Mont Blanc in this desert of loneliness" with Cosima and his son Siegfried.

But at the same time he still felt that he was the great figure of the epoch, who bore authentic witness to the spirit and essence of the age. It is not simply the Romantic conception of the artist with which he sought to align himself. Rather, he replaced the image of the Outsider suffering at the hands of the world with a claim which simultaneously raised the individual to a representative level: the Artist as the conscience of the world, as the secret pretender to the throne, who has suffered more deeply and seen further than anyone else. He repeatedly announced his intention to develop a new theology, and his plans to emigrate were often connected with the idea "of founding in a religious sense . . . new communities and a new humanity."

WAGNER ASSUMED the role of adversary to the spirit of the age very consciously and in the guise of a moral sovereign. The *Diaries* contain a large number of dreams, and on one occasion he reports on waking up that the Pope, seized with emotion, has just kissed his hand. By no means in a dream, but when he is most bitterly awake, he remarks of Nietzsche that his apostasy is "impossible to expiate . . . his sin against the H[oly] Ghost." And after a rehearsal for *Walküre* he declares he will alter the scenery one day when he produces the play "in heaven at God's right hand and the Old Man and I are looking on . . . ." Such assertions may sometimes have been meant ironically, yet all the same it does illustrate the peculiarly exalted, semi-religious notion he entertained of himself and of his art, and its high-priestly pretension, which always added an obtrusive whiff of incense and sanctity to his great dramatic spectaculars.

The outwardly small, corpulent man, who talked in gushing Saxon dialect and hardly possessed any signs of natural dignity, dramatised himself to these heights of pretension. How much effort and self-discipline it cost him emerges from the casual remark that Liszt did not need to do anything, he simply had to be present in order to impress people, but "the likes of us must always be sublime (*erhaben*)." In this respect that histrionic talent of which Nietzsche spoke stood him in good stead: the ability to raise everything to a theatrical level and produce a grand effect. It even left its mark on his everyday life and robbed it here and there of everything the idea stands for: the easy relaxed pace, the renunciation of the pathos of social roles. Wagner was always surrounded by the atmosphere of the theatre, even in his private life. If anything has a worthy claim to credibility in Cosima's diary notes, kept with almost inconceivable energy for over 15 years, then it is the unmistakably even stage tone, the aura of solemn gestures and muffled words, which reflect not only her highly-strung temperament but also the house style of a human relationship. "In sublime weariness we proceed to our rest", she notes in the evening—and in the morning: "Gloriously we greet this new day."

[2] Cosima Wagner, *Die Tagebücher*, Vols. I (1869–77) and II (1878–83). (ed. Martin Gregor-Dellin and Dieter Mack, Piper Verlag. 1976–77). *The Diaries*. By COSIMA WAGNER. Vol. I, 1869–1877. Translated by GEOFFREY SKELTON. Collins, £15. (Vol. II will appear in 1980.)

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THIS HIGH THEATRICAL FINISH is certainly even more apparent in the evening gatherings, often with one or two friends, when the drawing-room becomes a stage and Wagner sings whole passages from *Tristan*, appears as the *"Steinerner Gast"* (the Commendatore in Mozart's *Don Giovanni*), or recites Hamlet's soliloquy, "himself sublimely beautiful, personally as well as artistically shattering", as Cosima notes.

Yet the extent to which the great declamatory gesture stamps his personal relations remains even more remarkable. One discovers in Richard Wagner, not without surprise, the devotion and inspired attentiveness of the born lover, even in phases of extreme productive irritation; and his protestations that without Cosima he would not have composed another note and would not have written another word run through both volumes like a leitmotiv. *Meistersinger, Ring, Parsifal,* Bayreuth and the other writings as well—they had done all that together for immortality, he rapturously confesses. But this constantly renewed homage, these avowals of love, however sincerely they may have been meant, are never formulated without at least a hasty glance at the sort of effect they would produce. Not infrequently he fetched her out of the adjoining room by means of a sigh or a curse. On one occasion she heard him loudly shout *"Ach!"* and when she arrived on the scene her inquiries were met with this reply:

"I thought, when will we—you and I—be in that other world to which we belong; we have nothing to expect from this one, it was here only to give birth to the two of us."

Whereupon she exclaims:

"*Ach!* I have a blissful feeling that life can give us nothing! And cannot harm us."

This is nothing other than an operatic duet, and similar stuff is to be found on many pages, with the 60-year-old in the role of the youthful lover which really does seem overdone on occasion. As when he provokes an argument as to which of them is more fortunate, and in a gravely unsuccessful image calls her the hook on which he hangs suspended over the abyss, or welcomes his fate that, when his life is coming to an end, she is the last thing he will ever see. On the very evening before his death he says, celebrating their union for one last time: "It only happens once every five thousand years!" Bourgeois marriage as a sacred stage festival.

HER SIMPLE REPLY TO HIM when he praises her courage in their existential adventure together is also not without emotive force: she had no courage, she just loved him. Probably her only fault in his eyes was that she did not sufficiently acquiesce in his desire to dramatise even their own personal relationship. The quarrels, for which he was always to blame, were certainly not just the reactions of his exhausted nerves to the continual tension of artistic production; rather it seems that he was also sometimes fed up with the infinite harmony of their relationship and sought in his domestic scene the very thing that word originally meant: the opportunity to make the grand entrance, to engineer a crisis and finally to effect a reconciliation.

Cosima reacted to the marital clashes passionately but submissively, in a manner that was not without masochistic undertones. "My whole body is trembling and shaking", she writes after one argument, but she always used the same method—"the ecstatic embrace of pain"—to overcome and resolve the conflict: "What can a poor woman do but suffer in love and passion." Surely it is inadmissible to speak (as one critic does) of the "dialectical character of this kind of servitude" and to see in Cosima's subjection a strategic ploy in the battle of the sexes—the establishing of a secret system of authority purely through gestures of submissiveness.[3] For this interpretation not only

[3] Peter Wapnewski, *Richard Wagner: Die Szene und ihr Meister* (Beck Verlag, 1978).

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ignores the moral impulses behind her attitude (which the reader of her notes will number among the things that particularly motivate her), but also her fragility, her existential suffering, to which her only answer was tragic despair: "Life is difficult for me! (*Leben fällt mir schwer*)."

THROUGHOUT HER LIFE, Cosima suffered the trauma of betrayal, because of her unfaithfulness to Hans von Bülow whom she had left for Wagner. These notes were intended as a collection of material for the second part of Wagner's autobiography; but the actual, noticeably stronger reason for writing them down was, however, the need to justify herself and to explain her actions to her own children, to ask for their forgiveness: "to atone and make amends as best I can." The power and rigour of bourgeois morality has seldom been so triumphantly proven as in these pages, even if it must be said that it is only Cosima's hunger for suffering, her need to be submissive, and her "self destructiveness" which make the triumph so overwhelming. In all this she saw herself not only compensated, but also elevated through the awareness that suffering is an artistocratic category of experience. Submission was her form of pride: "I am transformed by the dignity of pain which can never be cast off, during the day hot and dry as in a fever, at night in tears . . . ." *O felix culpa!*

The roots of this persistent depression, however, go deeper than the awareness of having transgressed the norms of bourgeois morality. Cosima was dominated by the feeling of the indissoluble connection between existence and guilt, and, constantly brooding on this, she attempted to despatch her own guilt into the realms of the inevitable. Consistent with their common penchant for elevated feelings and gestures, one night she asked him to bless her, and when in some perplexity he asked what he should say, she replied: "The good does not need to be good (*Das Gute braucht nicht gut zu sein*) . . . ." It may have something to do with the distortion of perspective in a shared life, inevitable even in a document such as this where self-denigration is taken to the extreme, that the idea suggests itself that Richard Wagner was himself much less affected than Cosima by this feeling of existential guilt which nevertheless plays such a singular role in his work. At any rate he occasionally seems to envy her her suffering, the depleting conflicts of conscience, and the incessant outbreaks of fresh tears. And then, as if to justify himself, he points to music as the chief cause of this. Music deadens and corrupts people. A musician is "a true beast of burden", he asserts; he lives "like a kind of animal." Another passage elaborates on this:

> "He complained about the demands of his artistic calling because in responding to them he was forced to leave his own moral feelings undeveloped."

THE OTHER GREAT MOTIF of the diaries, towering above everything else, is the idea of exit, cessation, extinction—the impatience for the end, the almost drunken desire for self-destruction. These ideas, also among the dominant themes of Wagner's work, appear right at the beginning of the diaries and rapidly crystallise into the idea of the death partnership. However much the romantic idea of redemption and the moribund mythology of the fusion of souls, however much "literature", is mixed in with these fantasies about death, the credibility of the "home-sickness for death (*des Heimwehs nach dem Tode*)" of which Cosima speaks is unquestionable.

As early as June 1869, as one of the first entries testifies, Richard Wagner himself introduces the idea of the death pact which Cosima immediately takes over as a kind of relieving catchword. On a walk together one evening in Dresden, while their friends are at a performance of the *Meistersinger*, she asks him directly when death will finally come for them both, and notes happily that in a dream Richard dispelled the doubts as to whether she would follow him in his plan to drown together in the bath-tub, with the words "Cosima will do everything with me." And just like one of the characters from his operas, she writes: Love-affairs that "do not lead to death or fusion are always somewhat ridiculous", and: "Complete fusion only in death."

Behind this was certainly also the idea that the uniqueness of their relationship could only be fittingly sealed by a dramatic exit. Confronted with true love "the whole world of morality crumbles" Wagner observes on one occasion, it is like a "plutonic eruption"; and although Tristan (as he puts it, the story of "a being completely devoured by love") was the inspiration of another time and another passion, the relationship with Cosima became in his own words his real Tristan experience, despite the fact that it eventually carried over into bourgeois domesticity: "There was no trace of the Goethe/Charlotte von Stein relationship in it, it was all bloody." Even if his

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theatrical temperament was more than a little responsible for the idea that what had begun so bloodily must find a bloody end, Cosima took it up with extreme solemnity, prepared for any consequences. Only the thought of the work of this "unique", "ineffable" man gave her the strength to keep going, suffering, castigating herself, renouncing death. If life was not to be allowed to end, it could still be the rehearsal for the end.

"I grow old gladly", she remarks, "with every grey hair a stubborn thought is extinguished." Gloomily the 32-year-old describes Richard's erotic needs: "all the passion has gone out of love for me .... He says to me, and what anguish it causes me to hear it, nature blessing our union is the very thing that has given him assurance and peace." And she continues, "From that time a new life began for him"—whereas she feels the longing for death "with almost insuperable force" and sees no difference whether it comes as the extreme intensification of a happy experience or as the final refuge from disgust and exhaustion with the world. With their compulsive agitation, quite a number of entries on this theme sound like an echo, admittedly a rather tired echo but no less earnest, of Kleist's rejoicing in the face of the death-pact.

> "Yesterday and today, I put my whole being into a prayer: to die together with Richard!"

Cosima survived him by 47 years.

THE DEEP PESSIMISM of these notes did not, however, stem only from individual feelings of guilt and romantic sympathy with death; it also had an objective side, and was inspired just as much by Wagner's despairing view of the prevailing political and social conditions. It is often observed that despite all the grandiose, narcotic effects of his work, in which the vitality, confidence, and noisy optimism of the 19th century often seem to find their ecstatic apotheosis, he belongs far more legitimately to the tradition of cultural pessimism; and many have also argued that he was one of the great denouncers of the epoch and sowers of cultural defeatism. But the extent of his quarrel with his time, the obsessive character of his antipathy towards it that carried over into everyday life, only becomes really evident in these diaries.

Undoubtedly there was a good deal of naive, private seeking after revenge in all this: the world was going to feel the consequences of giving such a hesitant reception to his work. But behind this one immediately recognises the Romantic contempt for reality, which is the actual cause of all these outbursts over the "unbelievable decadence", the corrupting world of capitalism, of spiritual sterility and moral iniquity. The equivocal German relationship to politics is manifest in Richard Wagner in all its guises: contempt on the one hand, together with the inclination on the other hand to regard it as the art of the impossible and to castigate reality from a lofty standpoint for falling short of utopia. He relates that even as a child, in his attempt to float between two chairs on cardboard clouds he had cut out himself, he failed to reconcile the real and the ideal; and this continued to be the case.

THE TRUTH, which he scornfully plays off against reality, is that all civilisation is bent on destruction. Money, possessions, and the materialist devaluation of life in general made the ruin of the world inevitable; and it is illuminating to follow how ingenuously he connects the mythological and artistic idea of the curse on gold with the reality of the years of prosperity in Germany.

It would certainly be unfair to reproach him for his own material ambitions, and to sift from these pages information about his business acumen, his calculating genius in the petty battles over performance rights, publishing contracts and royalties, although it is rather fascinating to observe how the scorner of possessions and money "enjoys his wealth" after moving into "Wahnfried", how he descends in the ducal palace into "total wallowing in riches and beauty." During the organisation of the festivals this touches on the comic when he suddenly cries out that they wanted to do everything themselves, "no director, no nothing, just a cashier." But in reality of course his predilection for the costly and the beautiful, for decadent luxury, carries over into his music, which not only transcended the aesthetic categories of bourgeois society in a revolutionary fashion, but was also the characteristic expression of that society. Its inclination towards extravagance, towards ponderous sensuality, its taste for the narcotic, for elegant bombast, and for luxurious effects ultimately, in spite of all intellectual fragmentation, drew it again and again into proximity with that "Grand Opera" which Wagner himself felt to be a bourgeois spectacle and an expression of that very decadence with which he was desperately afflicted.

It is presumably part of his inclination towards dramatic climaxes that he not only regarded final destruction as inevitable, but also began to long for

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it and to evoke it in enthusiastic apocalyptic fantasias, "the end of the world in every note": "I thirst for extinction, corruption (*Ich dürste nach Vergehen, Verderben*)." When he composed a coronation march at the beginning of 1871, certain difficulties naturally arose: "I cannot produce something like that."

For, as he remarks with considerable pride: "I am the plenipotentiary of destruction." In his younger years he had still believed in the possibility that the world could be changed. It is true of course that he had become a revolutionary not least in the interests of his art, for which he hoped for all sorts of possible new effects from the overthrow of the status quo. Obscure urges towards some form of protest and the inclination of the artist towards outspoken extremes, determined more by his own temperament than by any political conceptions, also played a part in his revolutionary commitment. But it was prompted throughout by the notion, though a vague one, that the corrupted world could only be saved if the pure and uncorrupted set it ablaze and the true art rebuilt everything afresh from the ashes.

IT IS PART OF the representative character of Wagner that he soon enough took the path of the German bourgeoisie, for some of the way at least. He effected the change from the emotional standpoint of a revolutionary to an anti-political stance, the withdrawal from the public sphere into the private sphere, with all the disillusioned resentment that characterises such a move—a disappointed misanthrope, who no longer conceded a chastening effect even to his own work and was hardly ever able to think about it without a feeling of remorse and of being misunderstood. "Everything", he declared disdainfully, "has been cast before swine."

The image is indelibly imprinted on the memory: the pair of them, solemnly crouched in their little corner of Franconia, stylising their increasing isolation into escapist disgust with the world, as with incredible dogmatism—reprimanding the whole of humanity while stalwartly confirming and admiring one another—they dispense their irritable judgments: on art, religion, politics, Judaism, the emancipation of women, and socialism. One may well ask where Wagner found the strength for the Bayreuth enterprise, which did in fact spring up like a cornfield in the hollow of his hand, and where he found the strength for the conception of such tremendous scores together with the daily strain of realising them, the strength to deal with the disheartening problems of procuring money, of organisation, of building the Festival Hall, and for overcoming a thousand obstacles as well as ultimately converting an audience whose aesthetic ideas violently rejected his work. An answer is to be found not least in his emotional response to a jeering age echoing with laughter, which could only be forced to its knees in shame and admiration by an unprecedented mammoth project which far exceeded the strength of any single individual.

ONLY THEN CAN WE also understand Wagner's constantly reiterated doubts concerning this "futile" enterprise. Admittedly on one occasion he does call the *Festspielhaus* his "greatest stroke of practical genius", and exclaims in high spirits that it stands there like a "madman's whim." But much more frequent are the complaints that Bayreuth has been a "nonsense", his "hill of suffering", and when, towards the end of his activities at the Festival Hall, together with Cosima he sees the building free of scaffolding for the first time, he is struck by the feeling of a "sunset": "No dawn!" Even in October 1876, after the opening festivals, he is constantly thinking of giving it all up and simply disappearing.

IT IS ONE OF THE PARADOXES of this life that the man who was afflicted by his country "as much as any man can be afflicted by Germany" was called upon again and again to define what actually was German. Indeed it is almost indisputable that there is something unmistakably "German" about his work, both in its literary aspect, in the choice of subjects as well as characters, and in the sort of musical treatment he gives them. The predilection for the Teutonic German area of legends, for the world of mediaeval knights and heroes, for the realms of fairy-tale and romance as well as for "the German Order of the Sword" and "German Art", all of this further spiced with a dash of metaphysical speculation and of ceremonious excess has for generations been felt to be almost a parody of what is called "German", both inside and outside Germany.

In addition, the extraordinary way in which his work leaves itself open to interpretation meant that, in times of fanatical nationalism, precisely its suspect elements were brought to the fore and this made his work useful to a narrow racist tradition with its hatred of all things foreign. In this way it

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laid itself open to exploitation by that man who regarded Richard Wagner as his greatest idol; and yet one must concede that this was probably the least misguided of all the false artistic interpretations perpetrated by Hitler's National Socialism.

A false interpretation all the same. Because the thing that always promoted this narrow nationalistic interpretation in Wagner's work was ultimately more often to be found among the incidental trappings: scenery, costume, and idiomatic flavour. Even its unmistakably reactionary elements, or at least those specifically orientated towards the past, could only fraudulently be pressed into the service of the state to further its immediate totalitarian aspirations. On closer inspection these works in fact represent the denial of politics in favour of mythology, the withdrawal from the area of national history into the

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purely human sphere, and we know that Wagner is not just playing off one possible interpretation against another from his work on the basic material for *The Ring*, which he consciously and methodically stripped of all historical additions and accretions until he had laid bare the *Ur-mythos*.

THE IDEAS of a powerful national state and of a special racial consciousness have as little claim on his personality as they do on his work. Even given the historical respectability of the nationalist idea at that time, it still remains conspicuous how unconcerned Wagner was about all the aspirations of national politics: "I am not to be numbered amongst the ranks of shallow patriots (*Tagespatrioten*)", he confided. Once only, at the time of the Franco-Prussian War, did he let himself be caught up in the national fervour. But Cosima's diaries leave room for doubt whether this was not rather inspired by his overpowering hatred for France, stemming from past humiliations he had not forgotten. He now saw it as the major symbol of a civilisation doomed to destruction, while victorious Germany became the object of new hopes, although admittedly these were far removed from the political sphere.

These once more turned to disappointment, and it is not difficult to compile a compendium of anti-German invective from the diaries seen in their entirety. In fact Wagner never wrote his continually projected book on the character of the Germans, but Cosima's notes give us all the important clues to his attitude. The Germans opened themselves up all too easily to foreign influences, they possessed neither form nor national character, they were loud, shallow and mendacious. Wagner once said of a photograph of Carlyle: "That's how we [Germans] should look: upright and wistful." Instead their best attributes were corrupted in his view by the pursuit of material success, by commerce and coarse pleasures: "Seeking only after profit and a half-penny worth of lust" is his short and cutting verdict. He complains of the stupid, beery emotions of the Germans, of this "wretched nation", of which it was so difficult to find anything to say in mitigation. He in no way excepted himself from this; he knew what great and what dubious qualities he had inherited from his country of origin: "We are dreadful! I can say this because: *J'en suis*!"

ONCE AGAIN, THE ANGER he felt concerning the marked resistance with which the nation as a whole had received his work, an anger he never overcame, is certainly behind this. The diaries carefully record each refusal to help finance the festivals by means of the so-called certificates of patronage, and it is certainly one of Cosima's fanatical misapprehensions when she writes that Richard covets neither fame nor recognition. Throughout his life he coveted nothing else. It is merely another of the contradictions of his nature that, against the whole spirit of the Bayreuth folk-festivals, he demanded recognition from those of higher social rank. When in 1876, alongside the lords, grand dukes and princes, the Kaiser himself appeared at the opening of the festival, the diary notes: "At last (*Endlich*)!" In fact Wagner concedes to Bismarck whom he admired at first, that he is doing enough, "he doesn't need to bother to think about the artistic work of the future." But when the Chancellor withdraws a subsidy of 30,000 marks, "bitter resentment" is stirred up which soon turns into total condemnation:

> "I came at the most wretched time Germany has ever experienced, with this swineherd [Bismarck] at its head."

Time and again he withdrew from this injurious reality and retreated into the opposing world of art. The Bayreuth evenings, however, with their regular literary readings or musical lectures, did not only represent escape and avoidance of reality; they were also inspired by the desire to see his work set on an equal footing with works which only "the ghost realm of the great dead" could provide. The Greek Classics, Cervantes, Kant, Schiller, Goethe and Schopenhauer were the favourite authors. Then after them came Shakespeare, always Shakespeare. "It is not to be borne", Wagner said enthralled, "his meaning is totally elusive. . . ."

The really sympathetic aspect of bourgeois cultural education, with all its hunger for intellectual acquisition, its longing for great thoughts and themes and its happiness in devoted admiration, can rarely be so directly observed as in these pages. At the same time, they also demonstrate the suggestive power of intellectual experiences. The doctors always had to admit defeat when confronted with the nervous conditions from which Wagner suffered: the amnesia, the persistent abdominal complaints, the tooth-abcesses, migraines, erysipelas, heat rashes and attacks of fever. But the reading of a book, even a witty remark, could make him forget all his ailments and put him in a good mood: this was the reality above all realities, an "infinite consolation." When Wagner relates a dream in which Goethe

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explains that he wishes to remain by his side, having found his true vocation with him, this not only testifies to Wagner's ludicrous arrogance, but also to an intimacy of the intellect which is only produced from a close, almost neighbourly conversance with the poets and artists of the past.

ONE IS CONSTANTLY ASTOUNDED by the sovereign manner in which he ranges over vast areas of European culture. His complicated texts, which correspond only too well with the infinitely interwoven motifs of the music, filled with allusions and associations, are also hardly conceivable without a sound knowledge of the splendours of bourgeois culture. One begins to sense the dangers to which his work was exposed by his literary sensibility, his psychological insight, the profound method of his scenes and characters. Without his capacity for transporting himself into that "mad, somnambulist state" over his own scores, into that "special state of desire" in which he used to "screw himself up", as he put it, not infrequently by artificial means—everything could have easily degenerated into a forced, pedantic kind of music, created by the tracks of a mechanical will.

He loved Carl Maria von Weber, whose music was his greatest educational experience: without him he would never have become a musician, he confessed, here "he found his homeland." He also admired Beethoven: "we are both creators of melody, we are of the same great line." At the same time, when speaking of musical "feeling for beauty", he saw himself as the "Successor to Mozart." He praised Mozart in a fine phrase for "teeming with wonders (*Wimmelnde Wunderbarkeiten*)", and noted with astonishment that Mozart never "composed anything foolish." But nevertheless he still raised objections. They concerned above all the "brevity" and the "terrible formalism" in the development on occasion. Mozart only seldom managed to "express his being." Significantly, he does not ask whether Mozart actually wanted to translate individual feelings—needs, longings or ecstasies—into music at all, since he himself always evaluated whatever befell him totally from the radically restricted perspective of his own concept of art. This is just as evident in his disparaging estimation of Rossini, Schumann, or Brahms as in his verdicts on Rome and the Renaissance. Even in the Sistine Chapel he still cannot help thinking of his own work:

> "This is like my theatre, here one recognises there is no tomfoolery."

That genius also means narrowing of vision, envy, and injustice, he repeatedly confesses with self-critical candour:

> "I cannot be just; to be so one must be nothing oneself, have nothing else in one's head but the weighing up of right and wrong."

HOWEVER, IF WAGNER does belong among the most impressive examples of what bourgeois cultural education once was, he has also shown its limitations. The ideas that learning liberates, that moral profit necessarily follows intellectual profit, that prejudices vanish when ignorance has been dispelled have seldom been so emphatically demonstrated as prejudices in themselves as they are in his personality. His passion for great literary and artistic ideas and his thirst for knowledge could not prevent him from sharing numerous insane ideas of the period: various conspiracy theories, false doctrines, resentments; and, rather than compelling admiration for the freedom of his judgment, he reveals himself as the advocate of blind faith.

The most concrete evidence for this is undoubtedly provided by Wagner's anti-Semitism. Combining a widespread idea with his own visions of decadence, he repeatedly argued that the Jews as the representatives of capitalism were also the real active force in the process of decay. In addition, he was afraid of uncontrollable foreign infiltration: the traditional hardiness of the Jews, their intelligence and often proved capacity for surrendering nothing of their own culture no matter what pressure was put on them to adapt, set them above all other races, he thought. As long as the Germans, unshaped and pliable as they were, had developed no national character, the state was aiding and abetting the downfall of the country by giving the Jews shelter. In two or three generations, perhaps, one would remove the restrictions and be in a position to let the Jews into Germany, because they were after all, as he once asserted, suddenly laying aside all his prejudices, "the very best of peoples (*doch die allervornehmsten*)."

However, in such clipped remarks, exposing the "rational" framework of his mad ideas, one does not get any further sense of the obsessive character of this hostility to the Jews, which extended over many years and repeatedly came to a head in malicious outbursts. The seamier reasons for this come to light when Cosima reports on Richard's "craziest dreams", in which he is mocked by Jewesses or, on another occasion, is "solicited" by

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them. "Always a lot of talk about race", she notes. The publication of the treatise written by Wagner on *Judaism in Music* (*Das Judentum in der Musik*)[4] occurs during the period of the diaries, and numerous entries register the powerful echo which it had at the time. One reads with irritation how Wagner "with some satisfaction" takes personal credit for suddenly "jeopardising the position of the Israelites" again after years of increasing liberalisation; or how Cosima, after reading an anti-Semitic speech by Pastor Stoecker, records: "It makes us laugh to think that Richard's essay on the Jews might have actually sparked off this campaign."

THE PSYCHOLOGY BEHIND this resentment seems even more surprising when one considers that many of the greatest admirers of Richard Wagner's work are Jews. Among his most committed supporters were the Leipzig opera director Angelo Neumann, who founded the travelling Wagner Theatre; the writer Heinrich Porges; Catulle Mendès; the conductor Hermann Levi; the pianist Josef Rubinstein. For years they all belonged to the most intimate circle of friends in Bayreuth, and Wagner occasionally remarked sarcastically: "We'll be having a synagogue in 'Wahnfried' soon. . . ." Rubinstein gained entry into the household by means of a letter which began with the sentence : "I am a Jew", and demanded "redemption through participation in the performance of the *Nibelungen*." This declaration evidently moved Wagner deeply; but it was certainly not this alone which made him the friend and soon also a sympathetic adviser to the younger man; rather, all reservations always disappeared when it was a question of artistic ability. For no other reason he also chose Hermann Levi as conductor for the première of *Parsifal*, but at the same time toyed quite seriously with the idea of inducing him to become converted to Christianity beforehand. For a long time he sought the appropriate formula "for baptising such a wretched fellow."

In deliberations like these there is already a suggestion of his sudden veering towards an inhumane, racialist scorn of mankind, which all the gestures of friendship and of professional respect, and all his enthusiasm for joint production could not prevent. It manifested itself in its cruder form when he once abruptly remarked to Levi's face: "He—as a Jew—only has to learn to die (*Er—als Jude—habe nur zu lernen zu sterben*). . . ." And when the Ring theatre in Vienna was burnt down in 1881 and more than 400 Jews were killed, he declared in "violent fun", as Cosima notes, concurring with him even in this: "All Jews should be burnt to death in a performance of *Nathan*. . . ."[5]

This is shocking, and one should not attempt to conceal the fact that Wagner's malicious hatred of the Jews went a long way towards giving German anti-Semitism a semblance of respectability, of social and intellectual credibility. He even prided himself on it towards the end of his life: "I can take some of the credit." His motives are to be sought above all, alongside his experiences in Paris, in that overwhelming anxiety of the epoch, which lurked behind all the bold gestures of defiance and merely created a concrete image of the enemy for itself in the Jews. When Wagner once watched a peacock spreading its tail, he remarked: "Just like his I[mperial] Majesty, pomp in front, fear behind." He was also speaking for himself.

CONTRARY TO ALL HIS rough, domineering characteristics, he was a feeble person, and loud in the manner of weak people, not really strong but only stubborn. Again and again the Diaries mention bursts of tears: from emotion, self-pity, feelings of impotence or artistic insecurity. Even in his younger years he sometimes used to sit down and cry: overwhelmed by the doubt whether he would ever be able to finish the huge comprehensive work he planned, which was already visible to him in outline. "I feel as though I'm literally going to cry my eyes out one day." There the matter ended. He only knew exalted states, he said of himself; everything was attended with paroxysms, whether "of joy or of suffering."

Thomas Mann called Richard Wagner's operas "marvels", and among the great, haunting impressions left by these notes is the realisation that they were wrested from a highly endangered constitution, racked with neurasthenia, exhaustion, repeated diseases and breakdowns; this was a marvel too. On many days he managed two or three bars, another time he did "admittedly force out one page of the score, but is totally depressed by the great difficulty of his task. . . ." He hated music, the incessant torments in the face of blank paper, his inability to bridge the gap between an idea and its execution. "Nobody would believe what a bungler I am", he confessed to Cosima in desperation; strictly speaking he was only able to

[4] See: Richard Wagner, *Essays and Stories* (tr. Charles Osborne, 1973).

[5] I.e. in Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's famous pro-Semitic plea for tolerance, *Nathan der Weise* (1779).

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improvise, but found it very difficult to turn an idea into form: "Mendelssohn would throw up his hands in dismay if he saw me composing." Even during work on *The Ring* he toys with the idea of giving it all up. On one occasion he shouts out at the dinner-table:

> "Damn this music-making, these convulsions it gives me, which never allow me to enjoy my success.... It is not true, as you imagine, that this is my element."

Yet what brought him back to music again and again, to this "torment of my life", was an irrepressible, almost manic creative urge. The essays and countless letters, the autobiography, the evening recitals, readings and songs—the often seemingly indiscriminate, almost devouring interest in everything that was written, whose theses he appropriated to reproduce them immediately, coloured and interspersed with ideas of his own, in wildly proliferating continuous monologues—all had their origin in this same need, and his music was only the concentrated form of this mania for self-expression. Once when he did not have access to his music paper for several days, racked by tooth-ache and an inflammation of the hand, Cosima wrote: "R. discontented, longing for productivity...."

AT THE SAME TIME the forces which repeatedly drove him on to work were rooted in his bourgeois attitude: in the awareness that art was not so much a vocation as a profession, which required a fresh act of self-constraint every day, allowed no prevarication or inspired lethargies, and silenced all moods. Not to allow internal needs, your own shortcomings, and the multifarious insults to the feelings occasioned by the world to get the better of you—and to stick devotedly to what must be done in defiance of all the temptations to give in—is in fact the essence of the bourgeois work ethic.

Nowhere does this second motivating element appear more forcefully and inspire more respect than in Cosima's notes that accompanied Wagner's last opera, *Parsifal*, which he finally completed in extreme weariness, troubled by illnesses and repeatedly relapsing into phases of unproductive listlessness. "It is finished (*Es ist vollbracht*)", she noted, alluding to the resemblance of those months to the Passion of Christ, when he entered her room with the completed score.

Even while he worked on *Parsifal* he had constantly complained of a feeling of profound exhaustion; he no longer had the capacity for exaltation. When the second Bayreuth Festival opened with the opera in the summer of 1882, Cosima noted: "R. wept before the performance, and at the end he cries out: 'I am tired!'...." He began to react to his surroundings with increasing agitation. Trivial things unleashed vehement bouts of anger, full of accusations and self-reproach. He spoke of his hatred for life: "Oh I wish I was dead." Even a trip to Venice, the city of *Tristan*, which he loved passionately (despite all his phobias about decadence, because its decay was evidence of spent force, refinement, and the romantic fascination of death) brought about no improvement. The convulsions increased in duration and intensity; he was noticeably suffering lapses of memory, and was filled with presentiments of death. One evening when his guests were leaving he called after them pathetically: "*Harlekin, du musst sterererrrerrrebenenene!* (Harlequin, you must dieieieieieieie!)." His theatrical temperament did not desert him; he even connected the thought of his own death with the idea of going on stage. When he died very suddenly fourteen days later, on 13 February 1883, he was alone in an adjoining room.

IT HAS NEVER BEEN possible to view Richard Wagner's work and personality without mixed feelings, and Cosima's great collection of notebooks has if anything further increased the irritation. As ever, all admiration for his mighty work, testifying to incredible musical and intellectual foresight, cannot gloss over those gloomy elements of primitive instinct which are also a part of it and do not permit an unequivocal devotion and unqualified veneration. There was something in him, as he himself remarked, "which is impossible to cope with (*mit dem man nicht fertig wird*)...."

Friedrich Nietzsche said early on that Richard Wagner's work was directed "against civilisation." It did not oppose it in an entirely innocent fashion. Too much thought, too much calculated desire to offend and condemn had gone into it, and in Wagner's question as to whether art is not a great sacrilege something of the feeling of his own problematic significance is encapsulated. The confusing mixture of utopianism hostile to politics, of mythical revolutionary fanaticism, blood cult and classless community, of longing for death, Old Nuremberg and modernity already contains, translated into artistic terms, the complete break with the norms and humane traditions of old Europe, which later occurred in reality.

"*Die Musik verklärt alles*", he said, "Music illuminates everything." Certainly not everything.

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Rosa Luxemburg

New Letters

Clarens, Switzerland
March 21, 1893

A VOICE in the night woke me. Startled, I listened. It was my own words I heard, "Dyodyo! Hey Dyodyo!" I was pulling the bedclothes towards me, irritably thinking my Dyodyo was there beside me (what an indecent dream!). When I couldn't move the bedclothes I murmured angrily, "silly Dyodyo, just you wait till morning!" After my voice brought me to my senses, I knew it was a dream, and I knew the sad truth—my Dyodyo was far, far away, and I was all, all alone. Just then I heard footsteps on the stairs. Half asleep I figured out it was *you*; you managed to catch the last train (in my dream I slightly changed the timetable). You didn't want to wake me up, went to sleep upstairs, and were going to surprise me in the morning. I smiled happily and fell asleep. In the morning I rushed upstairs only to see that my night's vision was merely a dream. If you don't come by Wednesday, I'll catch the first train to Geneva. Beware!

THERE IS ONE especially poignant moment in these new, previously unpublished letters of Rosa Luxemburg (all to her life-long comrade and companion, Leo Jogiches, and found recently among his papers). It occurs at the "historic high point" of all their efforts to establish a Polish revolutionary party which would take its place alongside the Russian and the German movements.

Four names keep on cropping up, as manifestos are written, pamphlets distributed, and as arguments with the "fraternal parties" rage (against Lenin and the Bolshevik line, against Bebel and Kautsky and the Social Democratic line): Karl Radek, Felix Dzierżyński, Jogiches and Luxemburg herself. The first two went East—became Russian Bolsheviks—one to become the head of the Soviet Secret Police, the other to fall victim to the Police State. (How true was Camus' remark that "every revolutionary is destined to become either a victim or an executioner"!) The latter two "went West", remained in Germany, and were both murdered in Berlin by militarist forces in 1919.

For all the tremulous liveliness, the life-enhancing enthusiasm and idealistic devotion revealed in these letters, a shadow of violence and death falls across them. Murder was the end, if one succeeded in making a revolution or if one failed: this is the sinister cycle of revolution and counter-revolution in our political history. The extreme Right kills the extreme Left, the extreme Left decimates itself.

THERE WAS ALWAYS *so much that was attractive about Rosa Luxemburg that it was inevitable that she, a "martyr" like Che Guevara, would become a Cult Figure, an "ideological saint" for those who wanted to cling to their battered faith in a revolutionary Humanism. Her famous "Letters from Prison" exhibited sensibility, aestheticism, kindliness. Her last pamphlets—powerful critiques of Lenin's* putsch *in October 1917, and of the incipient Soviet totalitarianism—documented her dissident independence of mind. Yet the question remains: if her "Spartakus" Revolution had succeeded, wouldn't she have suffered the same fate? She uttered ringing words in defence of those who "think differently", but she repudiated social democrats, despised liberals, hated conservatives. She insisted on "pluralism", but only within the iron framework of narrow Marxist principles which in the end always contracted into a crushing monolith of theory and practice. Her tragic fate is instructive, but is there valid instruction in her ideas?*

YET THESE ARE only intellectual and ideological considerations. The great interest in these letters to Leo Jogiches is their "private" side, the personal and inner life of a formidable European woman eager to break all the forms of 19th-century bourgeois society and so touchingly caught up in all its overwhelming contradictions: romantic love, individual ambition and success, tidy petty-bourgeois domesticity (hats, dresses, gloves, a maid) the delights of a good table, prim and proper appearance, an embarrassed pecuniary prudery (penniless and constantly haggling with her lover over her "stipend"), etc. Small wonder that her intensity was constantly on the verge of burning itself out, occasionally longing to abandon the public cause for the private pursuit of happiness, at times turning to thoughts of suicide.

A book of these letters, Comrade and Lover, *based on the three-volume Polish edition* (Roza Luksemburg, Listy do Leona Jogischesa....*Warsaw, 1968-71) will shortly be published by the MIT Press, edited and translated by Elzbieta Chodakowsk-Ettinger.*

M.J.L.

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Paris, Sunday 3.30 p.m.
March 25, 1894

MY DEAR! I've been very angry with you. I must bring up some ugly things you did. I was so hurt that I had decided not to write at all for the rest of my stay here. But my feelings won out. This is what I hold against you:

1. Your letters contain *nothing,* but *nothing* except for *The Workers' Cause,*[1] criticism of what I have done, and instructions about what I should do. If you answer indignantly that you never fail to say tender things in your letters to me, let me tell you that *sweet talk* is not what I want. You can have it. I want you to write me about your personal life. But not a single word! Our only ties are the Cause and the memory of old feelings. This is very painful. I realised it here with particular clarity. When totally exhausted by the never-ending Cause, I sat down to catch my breath, I looked back and realised I don't have a home anywhere. I neither exist nor live as *myself.* In Zurich it is the same, or rather still more annoying, editorial work. I don't want to stay here or go back to Zurich. Don't tell me I can't stand the never-ending work, that all I want is some rest. No, no, I can stand twice as much but what I can't stand is that wherever I turn, there's only one thing—"The Cause." It's boring, draining. Why should everybody pester me when I give it all I can? It's a burden—every letter, from you or anyone else, always the same—this issue, that pamphlet, this article or that. Even that I wouldn't mind if *besides, despite* it, there was a *human being* behind it, a soul, an individual. But for you there's nothing, nothing but "The Cause". Have you had no experience all his time? No ideas? No books? No impressions? Nothing to share with me?! Possibly you'd like to ask me the same questions? Unlike you, I have impressions and ideas all the time, "The Cause" notwithstanding. But with whom am I supposed to share them? With you? Oh, no, I've too much pride. I'd share them with Heinrich, with Mitek, with Warski,[2] but alas, I don't love them and don't feel like doing it. I do love you but—I suppose I'm repeating myself.

It's not true that right now you're pressed for time. There's always something to talk about and time to write. It all depends on one's attitude. Here's a typical example for you—and my second objection. Let's say that you indeed live only by our and your cause. Just take the Russian cause. Did you write me a single word about it? What's going on, what's being published, how are those people in Zurich? No, it didn't occur to you to write me anything about it. I know nothing special has happened; still, one writes about small unimportant things to someone close. But you think that for me it will do to scribble articles for *[The Workers'] Cause* and to follow your "modest opinions" to the dot.

Very characteristic.

3. Another example. Hein went to Zurich. As I learned from his letter, he told you about the whole affair, and he discussed it with you, and you *insisted* on changes in the organisational relations between *Cause* and the Party. Without telling me a word? without my opinion? without telling me anything, you make and *push* your decisions? At least H was honest enough to write and ask for my opinion. You never did.

4. I found out from Brzez[ina's] letter that he instructed Heinrich to tell me about the situation on the frontier [smuggling *The Cause* into Poland]. Of course Heinrich informed you at once, but you didn't tell me a word. I'm sitting here, rushing the work, shipping the paper, *with no idea* whether there is any frontier, whether and how much will reach its destination, how soon, who's doing what—Brz or Hein. All this is regarded as information I can live without.

Your magnanimous advice not to *bother* about practical matters, they'll be taken care of without me, could only be given by somebody who *doesn't know me at all.* Such advice, "Don't bother, your nerves are too weak," would just do for Marchlewski.[3] For me such an attitude (even with the "darling" thrown in) is insulting, to say the least. On top of it, your directions are as frequent as they are crude: do this or that with Warski, at Lavrov's behave this or that way, stick to this or to that. In the end I get an intense sense of distaste, weariness, fatigue, and impatience which overcomes me when I have time to think. I'm not telling you this because I bear a grudge. I can't *demand* that you be what you are not. I'm writing partly because I still have the stupid habit of telling you what I feel and partly because I want you to be aware of what's going on between us.

ATTACHED ARE the proofs of all articles, except for Marchlewski's and the *feuilleton.* I didn't get the proofs of Marchlewski's article, but I rewrote it, so don't worry. The *feuilleton,* you know, Krichevsky's, isn't set yet. I'll go over it today.

I'm sending you the proofs because I'm slightly tired and don't have a clear grasp and I fear your reproaches. Look it over and jot down your notes. There's enough space. I didn't look at the proofs or

[1] *The Workers' Cause* (*Sprawa Robotnicza*), party organ of the Social Democracy of the Kingdom of Poland from 1894 to 1896, printed in Paris and smuggled into Russian-annexed Poland. R.L. was editor in chief after 1894.

[2] Adolf Warszawski-Warski (1868–1937), a leading organiser of the Polish workers movement, and in 1918 of the Polish Communist Party. He perished in Stalin's purges and was "rehabilitated" in 1956.

[3] Julian Marchlewski (1866–1925), economist, journalist, active in the Polish movement and in 1919 co-organiser of the Communist International.

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correct the spelling, but don't bother, just look at the content. Krichevsky's article took up three columns, so one sheet just wouldn't do. The issue would have been flat because the article about the fight for shorter working hours, although superficial, took up a lot of space. See if you can cut it. I'll add some facts to the article about *our own* struggle and its effects, and I'll change the ending to make a transition to the struggle for an eight-hour day. . . .

We'll be left with seven empty columns in the double sheet. We can put in an article about women—one column—another about wages—one or one-and-a-half—and I'll have to write an article on politics. That worries me most because I can't think of anything. Of course I'll write it, no matter what. I'll keep it short, two or two-and-a-half columns. In the remaining space I'll put a short piece about preparations abroad for May 1st, emphasising three points: (*1*) the English shifted the ceremony from Sunday to the exact day May 1st falls on; (*2*) the Germans agreed to *celebrate* it; (*3*) all French socialists joined to celebrate May 1st *together* for the first time. It will make the issue attractive and complete. You probably won't be delighted with Warski's article about May 1, but I cannot make it perfect. The poor man wrote it, I turned it down and outlined it for him, he rewrote it as I suggested. Then I revised and corrected it twice and I can't ask more of him. It's not bad now.

Tell me frankly what you think about the articles. No need to sweeten your comments on my articles with compliments that are distasteful. To make the article about working hours more readable, I'll break it into separate parts according to countries. I'll have the whole cut and fastened, and it will be easier to turn the pages. I didn't like Krichevsky's article—I'd rather write one myself, but I'll try to rewrite it. Your comments agree with mine more or less.

NOW I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU the following questions:

1. Is it all right to say that in 1848 the French people fought mainly for general elections?

2. Did the Chicago demonstration take place in 1886 or 1887?

3. How many roubles to a dollar?

4. Did the strikes of the gas workers and longshoremen in England break out in 1889 and was it for an eight-hour day?

You'll certainly spot other questionable points.

Today's Sunday. You should get this letter with the proofs tomorrow, on Monday. Check promptly and get them back to me on Tuesday, at the latest on Wednesday, because on Tuesday I'll be finished with the articles (Warski is writing about the wages).—I was on Reiff's back till he hired one more typesetter, a Pole, and now he screams for the material.

Enclosed is Reiff's receipt and the bills. Together with the 100 [francs] I got today, I have 118 for The Cause. The brochure costs 90 or 100. (Paper is expensive; I think 7 Fr for one thousand small sheets and stitching.) What's left I'll keep for myself. Unfortunately I'm spending a lot of money, don't know how. The rent is 28 Fr, service at least 5—payable two weeks in advance, so I paid 16. I pay Jadzia 1.50 a day (she feeds me lunch and supper) so it makes altogether 23 Fr. It comes to 40 and I brought 60 and some change. It slipped through my fingers, don't know how: a lamp—1.50; cocoa—1.20; milk—1.65; Jadzia made me a hat for 2.25; gloves—2; sugar and bread for breakfast about 2 Fr. What happened to the rest? No idea. I spent 1 franc or $1\frac{1}{2}$ for flowers and pastry for Jadzia because she loves it (I don't eat any) and after all she spends a lot of time cooking for me. Perhaps Warski took a few francs, and something went wrong with the bills. Anyway, I'm penniless and must take about 18 from the money for the cause. I'll be more careful from now on. The money you sent got here so late that you must soon send about 125 for the February issue. Remember, it will be ready on Wednesday. To save on postal fees can you add some money for my expenses and my fare back home?

As for sightseeing in Paris, I doubt that I should go anywhere. The dreadful noise and the crowds make me faint and give me headaches. After half an hour in Bon Marché, I hardly made it to the street.

The celebration of the [Paris] Commune was poor. Lafargue, Paula Mink, Zévaès, Chauvin, and some others made speeches. Very shallow, in particular Lafargue's. Guesde promised to come but didn't.[4] There were perhaps 200 people. (Apparently there were more at the celebration jointly organised by all parties, but because of my nerves I was afraid to go.)

I must stop—it's getting late for the mail. You don't consider it necessary to send me newspapers, do you? You know very well that the French newspapers print nothing but Parisian trivia. I've no idea what's going on in Germany and in Austria. It's strange that you didn't think of it. Is Anna still in bed—isn't she any better? I'd certainly have written to her but *have no time*. Did you get the (400) issues? Did you get the pamphlet, and what's wrong with it?

How large should the edition of the February issue be [of *The Workers' Cause*]? Where and how many copies should be sent?

[4] Paul Lafargue: co founder of *Parti Ouvrier Français*, married to Marx's daughter, Laura. Paula Mink: a Polish woman active in the Paris Commune. Alexandre Zévaès and René Chauvin, members of the *Parti Ouvrier Français*. Jules Guesde, with Lafargue, co-founder of *Parti Ouvrier Français*.

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What's the matter with the German proclamation, it is *urgent*! And what about the Polish—there's no way I can do it.

I mailed the brochure to Krichevsky. Did he like it? Did Anna?

Shipped off 2,000 brochures to Munich. What do you want me to do with the remainder?

Had a letter from Mozhdzh[ensky]; it probably won't work.

"Read my letter carefully" and answer *all* questions.

Switzerland
July 16, 1897

No, I can't work any more. I can't stop thinking of you. I must write to you. Beloved dearest, you're not with me, yet my whole being is filled with you. It might seem irrational to you, even absurd, that I'm writing this letter—we live only ten steps apart and meet three times a day—and anyway, I'm only your wife—why then the romanticism, writing in the middle of the night to my own husband?[5] Oh, my golden heart, let the whole world think me ridiculous, but not you. Read this letter seriously, with feeling, the same way you used to read my letters back in Geneva when I wasn't your wife yet. I'm writing with the same love as then; my whole soul goes out to you as it did then, and now, as then, my eyes fill with tears (here probably you're smiling—"after all, nowadays I cry for no reason at all!").

Dyodyo, my love, why am I writing instead of talking to you? Because I'm uneasy, hesitant to talk about certain things. I've grown touchy, madly suspicious. . . . Your least gesture, one chilly word, wrings my heart, closes my mouth. I can be open with you only in a warm, trusting atmosphere, which is so rare with us nowadays! You see, today I was filled with a strange feeling that the last few days of loneliness and thinking have evoked in me. I had so many thoughts to share with you, but you were in a cheerful mood, distracted, you didn't care for the "physical", which was all I wanted, you thought. It hurt terribly, but again you thought I was cross merely because you were leaving so soon.

Probably, I wouldn't have the nerve to write even now had you not showed me a little tenderness as you were leaving. It had the sweet smell of the past and it is the memory of that past that makes me cry myself to sleep every night. My dearest, my love, you are impatiently skimming over this letter—"what the hell does she want?" If only I knew what I want! I want to love you. I want back the tender, serene, perfect time that we both knew. You, my dear, often read me in a trite way. You always think I'm "cross" because you're leaving or something like that. For you our relationship is purely superficial, and you cannot imagine how deeply this hurts. No, no, don't tell me, my dear, that I don't understand, that it is not superficial, at least not the way I think it is. I know, I understand what it means, I know—because I feel. When you said such things to me in the past they sounded hollow—now they are a grave reality. Yes, I feel like an outsider. I feel it seeing you gloomy, silently brooding over your worries and problems, your eyes telling me, "This is none of your business, you mind your own business." I feel it seeing you, after a serious quarrel, reserved, turning over our relationship in your head, drawing conclusions, making decisions, dealing with me in one way or another. But I'm left outside and can only speculate about what's going on in your head. I feel it whenever we're together, and you push me away, and, locked within yourself, go back to your work. Finally, I feel it when I think about my future, my whole life which, like a puppet, is jerked about by an outside force. My dearest, my love, I don't complain, I don't want anything, I just don't want you to take my tears as female hysteria. But what do I really know? It is probably my fault, more mine than yours, that our relationship is not warm, smooth. What can I do? I don't know, I don't know how to act. I do not know how—I can never plan ahead, draw conclusions, handle you in a consistent way—I act on the spur of the moment, I throw myself into your arms when bursting with love and sorrow—hurt by your coldness, my soul bleeds and I hate you! I could kill you!

My golden heart, you can understand and reason so well; you've always done it for yourself and for me. Why don't you want to do it now! Why do you leave me alone? Oh, God, how I beg you to come to me, but perhaps it is true—or so it seems to me more and more often—perhaps you don't love me *that much* any more? Truly, truly, I feel it so often.

Now everything I do is wrong. You find fault with me no matter what. You don't seem to have much need to be with me. What makes me think so? I wish I knew. All I know is that, all things considered, you'd be much happier were it not for me. Something tells me you'd rather run away and forget the whole affair. Ah, my dearest, I do understand—I know you don't get much pleasure out of our relationship, with my scenes that wreck your nerves, my tears, with all these trivia, even my doubts about your love. I know, my golden heart, and when I think of it, I'd like to be—hell!—I'd like not to be. It's too painful to think that I invaded your pure, proud, lonely life with my female whims, my unevenness, my helplessness. And what for, damn it, what for? My God, why do I keep harping on it? It is over. My dearest, now you'll ask again, what do I want, finally? Nothing, nothing at all, my

[5] Luxemburg and Jodiches were never formally married.

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dearest. I only want you to know I'm not blind or insensitive to the torment I'm inflicting on you. I want you to know I cry over it, bitterly, but I do not know what to do or how. Sometimes I think it would be better to see as little of you as possible, but then I can't help myself: I want to forget everything and throw myself into your arms and have a good cry. And again this cursed thought creeps in and whispers, leave him alone, he is enduring it all out of kindness. Then one or two trifling episodes prove me right and my hatred swells. I want to spite you, bite you, show you that I don't need your love, that I can live without it. And I start torturing myself and agonising, and the vicious circle starts again.

"What a drama!" Isn't it? "What a bore! Same thing over and over again." And I, I feel as though I haven't said one tenth of it and not at all what I wanted to say.

Language is false to the voice,
the voice is false to thoughts;
Thoughts fly up from the soul
before they are caught in words.[6]

Adieu! I almost regret this letter. Perhaps you will be angry? Perhaps you will laugh? Oh, no, do not laugh.

Pray, beloved maiden, welcome the ghost
As in the olden days.

Berlin
December 3, 1898

YESTERDAY I was at [Franz] Mehring's and came home sadly convinced there's nothing for me to do but sit down and write "a great work." Mehring, just like Kautsky, asked me at once, "Are you working on a major opus?" The question was put so seriously that I felt I "need" to create this opus. Well, obviously I look like a person destined to write a great work, and there's nothing I can do but prove the general expectation true. Any chance you have an idea what that great work is?

My golden one, if you relieve me of that report about my visit with Bebel and Kautsky, I'll return the favour with a faithful account of my conversation with Mehring; it's much more interesting. Well, first, he repeated several times I had done an excellent job editing *Sächsische Arbeiterzeitung*, much better than Parvus, "one saw the paper was actually edited", and that under my editorship the paper was at its best. He said this to Kautsky, too.

2. Both he and his wife (and, I suppose other old-timers) . . . are convinced I'll go back to Dresden and then exercise my dictatorship. They're funny; I'm amazed that they take my return for granted.

3. When Bernstein was mentioned, Mehring said to me, "You gave him a sound thrashing in *Leipziger Volkszeitung*. I was very pleased."

4. Neither Mehring nor the others believe Schönlank's radicalism can last, and they asked me what had made him support us in Stuttgart.

Mehring is convinced Ledebour won't last in Dresden much beyond Christmas because first, he is so outrageously lazy that any day now he'll show up in his office at noon; second, he is so cantankerous he can't work with anyone longer than a few weeks; third, as a theoretician he is an ignoramus with no idea how to run a paper. M[ehring] knows him well because they worked together on *Volksblatt*.

5. At one point, the conversation touched on Mehring's refusal to contribute to *Sächsische Arbeiterzeitung*. I told him frankly what I thought of it. He assured me sincerely that he simply couldn't work for three papers at once. Had he known that I didn't want regular contributions but an expression of his solidarity, he would have written some articles. He'd certainly contribute, he said, if I took over the editorship again. I suppose that's all, except that we discussed *de omnibus res* of the party, and we parted on very friendly terms.

THE INTERESTING NEWS I promised you is that for several weeks the police have been watching me. The last few days, day and night, two undercover agents hung around the janitor's place and followed me step by step. The janitor, a former comrade, kept me secretly informed. Then I got fed up and went straight to the police, to Mr Lieutenant, and put my cards on the table. I said that if this did not stop, I'd go to Windheim [the police chief of Berlin] and raise hell. Of course, Mr Lieutenant pretended total ignorance, but the next day the agents were gone. Mehring advised me, in case they show up again, to put a paragraph in *Vorwärts* and they'd disappear into the woodwork. What the hell's going on? I've an idea it's a case of mistaken identity. Either they take me for somebody else or somebody else for me. In any case, I'm on my guard, I burned letters, registered myself, went through papers. Most probably this'll be the end of it. . . .

Yesterday I got the money, 80 M, and hope to god it's the last time I have to take money from you. . . .

Physically I'm still very weak, and though I am taking good care of myself, I could sleep twenty hours a day.

Write about yourself, a lot . . . .

A thousand kisses, yours R.

Berlin, Sunday
January 22, 1899

I WAITED AND WAITED for the letter you had promised, but when I got the short one I didn't

[6] Adam Mickiewicz (1798–1855).

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feel like writing for several days, and even now it's hard to write. As I told you many times in Zurich, I find your whole attitude toward the Russian revolution horrendous and disgusting. Eventually one has to face up to the fact that it is senseless to sit back idly and just gripe and criticise. I never liked the way you kicked every Russian who tried to get near you. One may boycott or "punish" some people, a group, but not a *whole movement*! Your behaviour is unbecoming to a strong, high-minded person. . . . I'm not telling you all this because of your comments concerning *my* intended involvement with the Russian revolution, which leaves me entirely cold. I disagree with your views, but this is too trivial to argue about. Personally *I* don't give a fig about the whole Russian revolution. I thought that those connections might be useful to *you*. Of course, only if you *want* to get involved. Your complaints that they don't come to *you* are simply ridiculous, as you certainly knew when you wrote to me. Everybody who turned to you got the same treatment on principle: mockery, "spitting and slapping", as you yourself put it. How can you expect them to come to you?

As for their assumptions that you and I have broken off, you're absolutely wrong because I've talked about you with Szirman and others to make our relationship clear, so that all of them are perfectly aware of it. (For instance Sz[irman] knows you stayed with me in Dresden.)

As for saving Szirman "from this milieu", if you'll pardon me, my "enlightening" her before I can give her something better to do will amount to nothing but dragging her away from the revolution. It's better for her to do something, however insignificant and trivial, than do nothing but ridicule others. This kind of entertainment one should reserve for *oneself*, but one mustn't entice others. Also you seem to forget that "what makes a German thrive makes a Russian croak." You know why you make fun of *Soyuz* [Union of Russian Social-Democrats Abroad], but when characters like Szirman or Firyukov do the same, they go downhill in no time. That's why I'm very reluctant to let such cubs in on what's going on behind the scenes, particularly when, as I already said, I'm unable to offer them anything better.

FORGIVE ME for writing all this. Perhaps it'll hurt, even anger you, but for once I, too, must tell you the truth. Think it over, and you'll have to admit that I'm right. The stand you've taken, and have been stubbornly clinging to for years, is simply *beneath* your dignity. It's *unworthy* of a man of your stature. Just to spite them, I'd *praise* everything they do rather than sit back and criticise. Let me repeat, so that there's no misunderstanding between us: I'm telling you all this *not* to justify *my* participation in this whole "revolution", which I don't give a hoot for, but only because of your attitude toward this "revolution." . . .

I embrace and kiss you warmly.
Yours R.

Berlin
March 6, 1899

THIS YEAR presents rain on me. It's a real horn of plenty. Just imagine—a fourteen volume, de luxe edition of Goethe from the Schönlanks. With your books it makes a whole library. My landlady will have to give me another bookshelf. You can't imagine how happy your present made me. Rodbertus is my *favourite* economist. I can read him over and over again for sheer intellectual pleasure. I feel it's not a book I got but an *estate*, a house, or a piece of land. As soon as all our books are here, we'll have an impressive library, and when we finally settle down together we must buy a glass-enclosed bookcase.

Berlin
April 19, 1899

FINALLY I've got a free minute—I sent out the proofs and am exhausted—too tired to sleep. I have to write you now. For a long time I've wanted, actually needed, to tell you something, but there hasn't been a second!!

Do you know what I've been feeling very strongly? Something is moving inside me and wants to come out. It's something intellectual, something I must write. Don't worry, it's not poetry again or fiction. No, my treasure, it's in my brain that I feel something. I feel I haven't used a tenth or a hundredth part of my powers. I'm not happy with what I've been writing and absolutely and clearly know I can do much better work. In other words, as Heinrich says, I need to "say something important."

It's the *form* of my writing that no longer satisfies me. In my "soul" a totally new, original form is ripening that ignores all rules and conventions. It breaks them by the power of ideas and strong conviction. I want to affect people like a clap of thunder, to inflame their minds not by speechifying but with the breadth of my vision, the strength of my conviction, and the power of my expression.

How? What? Where? I still don't know.

Laugh to your heart's content, I don't care. I'm convinced that something is stirring inside me, something is being born. You're probably saying, "A great mountain goes into labour and a silly mouse is born." Never mind. We'll see.

I've been thinking again tonight about *your* situation, how and what to do? I'd give anything in

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the world, half of my life, to have it all settled. Oh, Dyodyo!

Write to me *every day*. I made a decision: to write to you daily, time permitting, even if it's only a line or two. It's dreadful that neither of us has word of the other for *several* days.

My darling Dyodyuchny, I imagined you today awakened by a special delivery letter, crawling out of bed, cautiously sticking out your sleepy, blond dishevelled head through the crack in the door, a silly look on your sweet face, and I was sorry I wasn't standing at the door so I could plant a kiss on that silly nose—so hard it hurts.

Rózia.

Leipzig got 600 copies of "Social Reform or Revolution" already. Three thousand will sell quickly, and I'll request royalties for the second edition.

Berlin
ca. January 13, 1900

DYODYU, MY DEAR! You are really quite funny! First you write me an obnoxious letter, and then you respond to my cursory answer with "the tone of your postcard hardly puts me in a mood to write at greater length. . . ."

You don't seem to see that all your letters are systematically and colossally distasteful; they boil down to one long, drawn-out stuffy *mentorship* like "the letters of a schoolmaster to his favourite pupil." Granted, you make critical comments; granted, they are generally useful, even in some cases indispensable; but, for heaven's sake, by now the whole thing has become a *disease*, an addiction! I can't put a single idea or fact on paper without provoking a boring, distasteful harangue. No matter what I'm writing about, my articles, my visits, my newspaper subscriptions, dresses, family relations, anything I care about and share with you—none of it escapes your advice and directions. I swear to God this is getting to be boring! Even more so because it is one-sided. You never give me your work to criticise, not that I care to instruct you. I don't have the poor taste to do so and, even if I did, you wouldn't listen anyhow. For instance, what sense does yesterday's tirade of yours make: "concerning your tasks in the German movement and your political writing on the one hand, and on the other your household duties, *in order not to go to the dogs both spiritually and politically*. . . ."?

I'd be more interested in your telling me what you assigned yourself "concerning tasks?" What are you reading in order not to go to the dogs? Judging by the spirit and content of your letters, I'm afraid it seems more likely that *you* will "go to the dogs" in Zurich than I will in Berlin. It's distasteful—saving me every few weeks from "going to the dogs"!

All this comes from your old addiction—to moralise—which, from the beginning in Zurich, made me miserable and has completely spoiled our lives. You seem to feel called upon to preach at me and to play the role of my mentor always, no matter what. Your current advice and criticism of my "activities" go far beyond a close friend's comments—it's just systematic moralising. God knows, all that's left for me to do is to shrug my shoulders and cut my letters to a minimum lest they provoke further disgusting sermons.

Besides, how can I trust your moralising when, most often, it depends on your mood. Let me give you a little example: last week I complained to you that, unintentionally or even *against* my better judgment, I got involved in a personal friendship with the Kautskys. You said that this friendship made you *very happy*. Fine. Then, in response to my letter about my visit with the Kautskys, which certainly wasn't sent to elicit your "critical analysis", you went into a long and profound discourse about the futility and harmfulness of a friendship with the Kautskys. How do you reconcile these two views? It's simple—the first time you were in a good mood, the second, in a rotten one. Then, right away, you start painting everything black and saving me from "going to the dogs."

One more thing. I'm only impressed by principles and advice that the adviser follows himself. Along with your advice, do, please, let me know how things are with *you* (for instance, how is your [doctoral] thesis progressing, how systematic your intellectual work is, what "homeland" newspapers you subscribe to and read, etc., etc.). . . .

Affectionate hugs!
Yours *Rózia.*

Berlin
March 29, 1900

I CAME FROM Poznań so tired that I couldn't hold a pen in my hand until today.

I'll answer your letter briefly. At first having read your letter, I felt like telling you everything, reporting on my trip and explaining my urgent departure, etc., from *my* point of view, just as I used to do in the old days. But it occurred to me that for eight years I've been doing this to no avail, so I gave up. I'm going to write only about what deals with further plans, with facts.

Your letter made it clear that only your lack of wanting to prevents you from moving to Berlin; there are no other unfathomable reasons. If a person feels no need for a permanent union it is, I think, simply a lack of inner courage to carry on a

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marital relationship at a distance or on fleeting visits. Berlin, as such, means nothing. If you see no reason, no purpose to moving here with me, there is no way we can go on living as we lived, even temporarily, in Zurich. Even to correspond in the manner we used to is no longer possible.

Your suggestion that I come to Zurich solely to stir your desire to move to Berlin is strange, to say the least—I wonder how it's possible you didn't realise it. Perhaps you won't understand my response either. I cannot explain it to you. I can only assure you I will never set foot in Zurich, nor will I go to any other place to see you. . . .

It's entirely up to you how soon, if ever, you will feel sufficiently driven to settle here, near me. I can't and I don't want to interfere in any way, not even with letters.

As for my health, I'll let you know if there's an emergency. The same goes for my financial needs—in an emergency I'll get in touch with you. (N.B. Since I came back from Zurich about the fifteenth and made the trip to Poznań, I've barely earned half of my living expenses. If you can spare it, I could use 50 M by the 1st).

One more thing. My decision to stop writing is not the act of vengeance you think it is. It's not a boycott either. It's simply the need finally to get out of that charmed circle of riddles. I've been spinning around in it for too long.

Yours *Róża*.

Berlin
April 24, 1900

YOUR LETTER CAME just in time, just as I was desperately trying to figure out when this turmoil between us would end.

To explain my recent attitude and behaviour, let me tell you briefly: what has been going on between us of late—especially my visit to Zurich—has led me to believe that you . . . stopped loving me, that you might even be involved with someone else, that I was no longer the one who could make you happy, if it is possible to make you happy at all.

NOW BRIEFLY ABOUT other things. Dyodyu, my dear, if I "pushed" you out of my affairs, it was *only* because I felt guilty about burdening you with the Polish work. I told myself if I didn't stop doing that, I'd ruin you forever—and only out of plain egoism. Remember how often you've told me that in order to keep our relationship normal, you must know I can get along without you?! Well, I did everything I could to manage by myself, to free you from me. And you took it for "pushing you out"?! . . . If only you knew how hard it is for me to have no one to give me advice, no one to lean on or share my doubts with. But I suppressed this feeling, thinking I shouldn't drag you into my affairs—it would be deadly for you. If you only wanted to, how delightfully we could work and live together! There's plenty of work, and I can't handle even one-tenth all by myself.

Now, in addition to the German work, I have the Polish work, too. It's impossible to describe the meeting [conference of the Polish Socialist Party held in Berlin]. I must tell you about it. For two whole days a fight raged against me. But I dominated the whole meeting, and finally they put themselves into my hands. Since at the editor's request I covered the second day for *Vorwärts*, I could hardly advertise myself, and besides I didn't want to provoke the losers. In effect, complete victory on all fronts; I even won over the most implacable enemies. This caused a virtual panic in the intelligentsia wing of the PPS. They're already trying to distort events, as you can see from the article in *The Workers' Journal*, which I enclose (send it back *at once*). My answer will appear in the next issue.

My review of Schüller's book will appear in *Neue Zeit*. I was honoured twice: (1) K[autsky] gave me the French translation of his work against Bernstein and inscribed it to *Meiner lieben Freundin* R-L . . .—K-K . . .; (2) he asked if I'd agree to edit Marx's manuscripts in case Marx's legacy contains more manuscripts than just the fourth volume of *Das Kapital*. Of course I agreed. In a few days he's going to Paris to take over the legacy from Lafargue. . . .

The other day in Poznań was a success: I wrecked a Catholic meeting and spoke at three meetings—shoemakers, tailors, and a party meeting. . . .

I go to K[autsky] rarely and stay briefly—more often he comes to my place—they bore me to tears. In general, mankind makes me want to throw up, and you, you wicked, mean creature, make my heart ache.

When will you stop dawdling in Switzerland?!

Berlin, Monday
April 30, 1900

YES, you are quite right. We've been living separate spiritual lives for a long time. But it didn't start in Berlin. Even in Zurich we were spiritual strangers, and the frightful loneliness of these last two years is engraved on my mind. But *I* was not the one who withdrew, who shut myself off. Exactly the opposite. You ask if I've ever asked myself how *you* live, what's happening inside *you*? All I can do is smile bitterly. Yes, I did ask. I asked myself thousands of times, and I asked *you* again and again, loudly, insistently only to get the same answers, always the same—that I don't understand you, that you can't count on me, that I am incap-

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able of giving. Finally I stopped asking and never showed that I was conscious of or interested in anything. Now you ask how I could ever think you were attracted to another woman, since no woman but me is capable of responding to you, of understanding you. Exactly what I had told myself in the past.

You have forgotten, haven't you, that you kept repeating over and over again that I, too, don't understand you, that you feel utterly lonely with me as well. Then what's the difference? *This* realisation brought home to me that I don't exist for you any more. So my reaction to the same doubts was different in 1893? Of course it was. I've changed since then. I was a mere child, now I am an adult, a mature person in perfect control of myself, capable of gritting my teeth in pain, of showing nothing, absolutely nothing. But you, no matter what, refuse to believe that I have changed, that I am not the same person I was eight years ago.

One more thing. You persistently ask how I can write off our relationship so casually. The "casually" I don't want to discuss. How did I manage to do it? Here's the secret: My last visit to Zurich left me with no shade of doubt that you've grown utterly blind to me, to my inner being, that all I am for you is just another woman, perhaps different from others in that I write articles. Here in Berlin I constantly see *the kind of women* men live with, how those men worship them and yield to their domination, and all the time, in the back of my mind, I am aware of the way you treat me. After a long time I finally understood that you had lost all sensitivity to me, to my inner being. Indeed, you have even lost all memory of it. This, more than anything else, made me acutely and painfully aware that deep inside you had grown cold.

You ask if I *want* to renew our common spiritual life? The answer is clear, but, remember, its realisation depends on *you*. It is impossible to build a *common* spiritual life if we continue to live as we do. An agreement between us is possible only if you get rid of your mistrust and if you believe that I'm capable of understanding you and that I do care about your inner life.

There are so many, many things I want to tell you, but God knows I don't have the strength to write. Once you are here, once we start living at last, we'll tell each other everything. But perhaps then words won't be necessary. . . .

Considering future arrangements, why not go back to the original plan: settle in the South for half a year. Here it's impossible to live openly together, and short of that our life will turn into a caricature I fear more than loneliness. We need peace in order to live, and we cannot find it hiding. Think about it . . . .

Hundred kisses.
R.

Berlin, Friday evening
May 25, 1900

KAUTSKY keeps pressing me for articles for *N[eue] Z[eit]*, and I'm getting sick of it. N.B. The day before yesterday, they invited me for dinner again, and he took the opportunity to ask if I'd help him work on Marx's fourth volume [of *Das Kapital*]. It didn't take me long to find out what this "work" meant. He's transcribing the whole manuscript (terribly illegible) and intends to put it in order later on. Obviously my "help" would consist in transcribing or in taking his dictation. He's anxious for me to do it because, he said, after Engels' death, except for E. B[ernstein], he's the only person left who can read Marx's handwriting. He wants to initiate me into Marx's hieroglyphs, so that were he to die while working on the fourth volume, I'd continue the work. . . . He is much too honest and simple a man to have consciously tried to trick me into doing the copying, but *unconsciously* that naive story about his possible death had no other purpose. Knowing full well that neither our contemporaries nor posterity would ever learn about my silent contribution to Marxism, I told him straight out, I'm nobody's fool! Of course, I put it in an elegant form, that is, poking fun at his fear and assuring him it would be pointless to teach me Marx's handwriting, since my chances of a sudden death are the same as his. I also advised him to buy a Remington typewriter and to teach his wife to type.

Apropos, you ask why I'm "at odds" with her. I'm not. On the contrary, she loves me enormously, kisses me all the time, addresses me as *du*. But I've been observing her, and I don't like her character. She's very much like the Kalmansonov-woman [Pavel Akselrod's sister-in-law], only more sure of herself. That type of *woman* puts me off. I expect nobility in women and she has none.[7] *Hinc illae lacrimae* [hence those tears] and that's all.

I went to a good ladies' tailor whom my landlady knows from her better days. In a week, for Whitsuntide, I'll have my black skirt ready, and after the holidays, the yellow dress. I also ordered a nice little hat with a feather, English style, modest but elegant. It'll be delivered on Saturday.

What I get from *N[eue] Z[eit]* this month will cover my living expenses, but it won't be enough to pay for the tailor and for the hat. . . .

Have a nice Sunday!
Yours R.

[7] Luise Kautsky became one of L.'s closest friends. In 1923 she published, *Luxemburg's Briefe an Karl und Luise Kautsky*, followed by *Rosa Luxemburg, Ein Gedenkenbuch* (1929).

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Berlin, January 20, 1902

YESTERDAY I had the three Kautskys over, the Eisners, and Stadthagen who, naturally, arrived after 9 p.m., when we were about to finish dinner. The table looked wonderful (even small bunches of flowers at every plate, 10 pfennig each, and a potted hyacinth in the centre). The dishes were served without a mishap. First, rolls with caviar (don't faint, 50 pf only), salmon and eggs, followed by borsch with sausage-stuffed rolls, fish in sour sauce, steak with vegetables, compote, dessert, cheese with radishes, and black coffee with cognac. Beverages: beer and lemonade. They teased me with each new dish, especially Eisner, but devoured everything and at the end unanimously requested champagne. I went to the kitchen and brought out the bottle your brother sent, and they made silly faces. Naturally they emptied the bottle. We sent Singer a rather dreadful picture postcard, which everybody signed. They stayed till 1.30 a.m. Mrs Eisner brought me a coloured photo of her whole family in a beautiful gold frame. I put it on the little table, where it looks perfect. Now I'm getting back to work. Big hug.

Yours R.

Don't miss Potresov's article "The Vestal" in *Zaria*. To my mind this is the only article written in good Russian, not in the international Marxist jargon. It is a bit vague but what passion! It stirred me.

Berlin, February 11, 1902

MY DEAR DYODYU! . . . As usual, there were some funny moments on the tour. In Reichenbach, after the meeting (in each town it's a must to talk with a few comrades afterward, till 2 a.m., which I don't mind)—well, in Reichenbach one of the local bigwigs kept staring at me. Finally he spoke up, "You can't be more than twenty-seven years old and I thought you were forty-two." "Why?" I asked, surprised. "Well, from your picture in *Süddeutschen Postillon*." You can imagine how I laughed. They'd obviously mistaken the caricature in the paper for a real picture, and each and every one had loyally kept a copy if it.

For a change, after the meeting in Meerane I was stringently questioned about women's rights and marriage. A splendid young weaver named Hoffman has been eagerly pursuing the question, reading Bebel, Lili Braun, and *Gleichheit*. He's been arguing tooth and nail with the older comrades, who insist women belong in the home and want us to fight for the abolition of factory work for women. When I agreed with him, Hoffman was triumphant! "You see", he shouted, "authority supports me!" When one of the older men said it was a shame for a pregnant woman to work among young men in a factory, Hoffman cried: "These are perverse moral concepts! Mind you, if our Luxemburg were pregnant delivering her speech today, I'd have liked her even better!" I felt like laughing at this unexpected *dictum*, but they all took it so seriously that I had to bite my lip.

Anyhow, I'll have to do everything I can to be pregnant by the next time I come back to Reichenbach. Understand? Before we parted (at 2 a.m.), the young fellow stopped me. He wanted my opinion on an important matter: should he get married even though today marriage is a hypocritical institution? Luckily I said "yes" and my answer clearly made him happy. From the smiles and whispers and later from his own admission, it became apparent that he's about to get married. It's about time, too. His fiancée is already in the condition he likes so much. . . .

Lots of people joined the unions and subscribed to the party papers at the meetings. The whole trip has been spiritually refreshing though physically tiring. I visited the local weaving school in Glauchau. The foreman was very polite and showed me around. I learned a lot of interesting things. Must stop and write to Clara [Zetkin] and to Mehring! Hugs!

Yours R.

Prison in Zwickau,[8] *Friday*
September 9, 1904
Two weeks exactly, so 1/6 is over!

MY DEAREST LEONIA![9] Do me a couple of favours—it's urgent. I need a warmer blouse—it's high time you got me one. I'm wearing the zephyr blouse, but it's filthy and it's a pity to ruin the grey mousseline here. Strange how soon clothes wear out here, much sooner than at home, though I don't do a thing and hardly move. Lili [sister-in-law] promised me a skirt (the navy blue skirt is worn out and the black one with the royal train isn't exactly appropriate for a cell!). Józio [Józef, brother] came to see me and will remind Lili, so I should get the skirt soon. I won't need the *hat* till I leave prison (26 October, 11 a.m.) because I just walk in the yard, hatless. Get a size 44 blouse, the simpler the better and not in a striking colour. Munio [Maksymilian, brother] sent the warden 100 M from Warsaw for my own food, but I didn't accept it because Dietz provides all I need. I was sorry I had a migraine and didn't look well when Józio visited. Usually I feel fine.

[8] In 1904 L. was sentenced to three months of prison for insulting the Emperor Wilhelm II in one of her speeches.

[9] Because of prison censorship L. addressed J. as a woman friend; his name Leo became Leonia.

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The second urgent favour: please give the second part of this letter to Karl [Kautsky] immediately. . . .

You want to know everything about me. Here it is: I get up at 6 a.m., get coffee at 7, walk from 8 to 9, lunch at 12, at 3 have coffee, at 6 supper, from 7 to 9 lamplight, at 9 bed. I get *Berliner Tageblatt*. I read a lot and think a great deal. . . .

Best regards.
Yours R.

When I left you promised you'd read one book a day. Do you? You *must*, I beg you! Now I appreciate again the value of making serious books a part of daily life. It saves the mind and the *nervous system*. But Marx, you know, ends up by making me angry. I still *can't get the better* of him. I keep getting swamped and can't catch my breath.

What is Parvus doing? Give him my regards. Write to him, don't leave him alone.

Please send me promptly the German edition of *The Communist Manifesto* and *The Divine Comedy* in German (we have it, published by Reclam).

Why don't you send me some stockings (the smallest woman's size), but have them washed because new ones stain the feet. Three pairs would be fine.

I hope you still get up early and go to bed early. I'm happy every time I think how well you've been looking. I attribute this only to your getting up early. But then *why* did Luise [Kautsky] have to ring the doorbell for so long?

Prison in Zwickau
Friday, September 23, 1904
(13 — 4 = 9)

MY BELOVED LEONIA! To start with, figure out the cabalistic formula above. Many thanks for the parcel. The blouse is excellent. I made some alterations and wear it all the time. The cap, too, made an "interesting topic", didn't it? I wish you wouldn't dwell on these topics like some pedantic spinster, Goldilocks, or I'll lose my patience. When I finally get a letter from outside, there are many things I'd rather hear about than a shopping-for-a-blouse odyssey. I got neither *The Manifesto* nor the clippings attached to Luise's letter (Karl's article). Tell her it's pointless to send them. Of course you could have risked *Kladderadatsch* [satirical Berlin magazine]—I suppose I'd have gotten it. A good joke is my only cure for all worries, and the last issue was just magnificent.

That you live such a lonely life is insane and abnormal, and I take a very dim view of it. My present mood makes me hate such "asceticism" more than ever. Here I keep grasping greedily at each spark of life, each glimmer of light, each nuance in the feuilletons and theatre reviews in *Berliner Tageblatt*. I promise myself to *live* life to its fullest as soon as I'm free, and you, you just sit there overflowing with riches and, like Saint Anthony in the desert, live on wild honey and locusts! You'll turn into a barbarian, my dear girl, and when I come out of prison your Nazarene bloodlessness will clash violently with my Hellenic full-bloodedness! "Watch out, Buseli", as Frau Löwe used to say to her little kitten. Remember? It's too bad I can't brandish the rug beater as ominously as she did.

You want me to describe my cell, do you? No small order, *my darling* [orig. Eng.]. Where do I get the brush and watercolours to do justice to these riches! I just noticed a hectographed inventory of my cell on the wall and much to my surprise discovered there are about twenty objects here. And I was convinced the cell was entirely empty! The moral of the story: whoever feels poverty-stricken should sit down and make an "inventory" of his earthly possessions, just to discover how rich he is. You should make an inventory of your riches more often, and if you don't forget to include my modest person, as you unfortunately so often do, you will feel like Croesus. . . .

Many, many kisses.
Yours R.

Berlin, Sunday, May 21, 1905

I WENT OVER the proofs very carefully, so please include all my corrections and two inserts: (1) about armaments as you requested, (2) more about the economic struggle. Your supplement to *The Red Banner* is indeed tremendously impressive, and it gave me ideas for the finishing touches.[10] The issue is *chic*. One sees a skilled hand at work since you took over; everything "clicks" and moves forward smoothly. Still, I don't agree with you about the factory commissions. You silly jackass, what you lack is "class" instinct; from excessive radicalism you slipped straight into opportunism. That happens when one is radical simply out of a "sense of duty."

As a whole, "What Next" is strikingly impressive but—but—but—"there's the rub"—I protest most strenuously against publishing it as a pamphlet. It *must* be a *publication*, therefore the format of "What Next" must be retained; only then does it throb with the pulse of revolution. Nor will the intelligentsia respect a measly little pamphlet, and that's precisely what you can't grasp, *mein Lieber*.

[10] *The Red Banner* [*Czerwony Sztandar*], popular journal of the SDKPiL established in 1902 in Zurich, later published in Kraków.

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Therefore, I *categorically* insist that the *format* of "What Next" stays unchanged. I only give in on the title. Let's call the publication *"From the Revolutionary Era"*, subtitled "What Next?" No. 2 [it was L.'s assessment of the 1905 revolution].

Underneath, in *parenthesis*, put whatever you want (general strike and economic strike, etc.). I'd like very much to retain the title "What Next" for just *this one time*—it has a ring to it. But finally, I'll give up on *that*. The format, no! Not for the riches of India. You silly jackass. . . . N.B. Don't you dare leave out my motto from Mickiewicz, or I'll publicly protest against the vandalism of the editors.

Berlin
May 26, 1905

THE PRINTING of "What Next?" is an idiot's dream. . . . You might as well save the fairy tales for yourself—"nothing could be done" despite some "clever tricks". . . . I fail to understand this foul business—it's too stupid for words. . . .

Don't stick in such stinking prose: *"only by such means as among others, for instance,* by increasingly intensifying the demonstrations," etc. That is simply horrendous. Spare me those cowardly "ifs and buts," and "more or less"—"such means" either must be clearly defined or not mentioned at all. Regardless of the abominable style, what's clear in the way you hedge is the "caution" of a hesitant man afraid to spell things out—a man who doesn't know what to say himself.

If my style is going to be "corrected", I'm going to stop writing. Why were my "Cossack figures" transformed into "the dreary figures of *absolutism*." Who's the idiot who writes about the figures of absolutism? I wonder. . . .

Berlin, October 10, 1905

IT TEARS ME APART that it's so hard for me to write. Damn it, I can't be a genuine writer after all if I have to pull myself by the hair to force myself to write any old thing. Only under unusual circumstances, like when I get all excited (as when I started on the *V[olkszeitung]*, or during the February revolution), is my pen "winged." And when I'm sweating out an article, I feel so discouraged I can't even write a decent letter and feel like hiding in a dark corner.

Do you know what my bedtime reading is? The autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini in Goethe's translation. An extremely original work, interesting as a mirror of 15th c. Italy and France. Gradually I want to get to know my own classics well. Goethe has a soothing effect on me—a genuine "Olympian", I feel such affinity, such closeness with his Weltanschauung. Unfortunately I don't have Goethe's iron industriousness (to say nothing of his genius). The breadth of the universal spiritual interests this man had! It's incredible! And this was a "Hun." I wish somebody would explain this to me. And still, if we read together at night, we won't read fiction but something serious. Life is too short and our ignorance too great to afford such luxury.

Berlin, October 18, 1905

PLEASE READ MY ARTICLE very carefully since I sent it off without reading it. I deliberately wrote the paragraph about what it means "to prepare an armed insurrection" so that we won't look like Lenin's *Schildknappen* [henchmen]; Lenin *juxtaposes* it to the participation in the Duma, but what he really means by it is arming oneself.[11] That's why I didn't feel too good about you accepting that clause in the resolution which, in effect, acquired a Bolshevik tinge.

Your far-ranging plans of political agitation in connection with the Duma described in your letter really pleased me. All this is superb and I see I need not worry because you are really *thinking* about the work. The publication of the pamphlet "What do we want" should be part of the battle campaign. . . .

As to Parvus allegedly "joining" the Riazanov "group", that is a fairy tale and if spread by the *Iskra* group an impudent one to boot. What a face Parvus would make if he knew about it! N.B. Trotsky is (in Petersburg) against *Iskra*, but at the same time is supporting some other fictitious elections.

Berlin, October 20, 1905

YESTERDAY by a strange coincidence I took out a box with Mother's and Father's last letters and old letters from Andzia and Józio. I read them through and cried until my eyes were swollen, and I went to bed wishing I'd never wake up. I cursed the damn "politics" that stopped me from answering Father's and Mother's letters for weeks on end. I never had time for them because of those world-shaking problems (and still nothing has changed). And my hate turned against you because you chained me to the accursed politics. I remembered that you persuaded me not to let Mrs Lübeck come

[11] In her view "preparation for the people's revolt" must be achieved by raising the consciousness of the workers and "not by discussing how to arm the masses, how to provide weapons, or organise 'fighting squads' ", as Rosa Luxemburg wrote in her article, "To arms against 'the constitution' of the knout!" in *Z Pola Walki* [*From the Battlefield*], October 18, 1905.

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to Weggis lest she disturb my finishing the epoch-making article for [*Sozialistische*] *Monatshefte*, and she, she was coming with the news about my Mother's death! See how honest I am with you.

Today I took a walk in the sun and I feel slightly better. Yesterday I was almost ready to give up, once and for all, the goddamn politics (or rather the bloody parody of our "political" life) and let the whole world go to hell. Politics is inane Baal worship, driving people—victims of their own obsession, of mental rabies—to sacrifice their entire existence. If I believed in God, I would be convinced that He would punish us gravely for this self-inflicted torment.

Hugs.
R.

Apropos, a small drama: Feldman from "Potemkin," nineteen years old (now he really is safely abroad), had an eighteen-year-old fiancée. In Geneva she heard the false rumour about his arrest and jumped out of a window to her death.

Berlin, Thursday, October 26-27, 1905

TODAY I FELT more keenly than ever the abnormality of my work in Polish affairs. I get an order from you: "Write an editorial about [Poland's] autonomy" (or about the constituent Assembly)! Fine. But, damn it, in order to write it, I must read the Polish and the Russian press, I must be *au courant* with society's mood, I must be *in touch* with party affairs. Otherwise, all I can write are washed-out slogans, and I can't "hit the mark." The time when propaganda was made by expounding the party's constructive views is over. . . .

I had to stop last night because the Kautskys dropped by again to take me to Bebel's. . . . There really was no need to see Bebel, as it turned out, but I didn't want to refuse Kautsky, and in general this has its uses. We sat and chatted, or rather listened, because as usual Bebel talked "all by himself" till eleven o'clock. It appears that the *entire* bourgeois press has sunk its teeth into the roast; the *Vossische* [*Zeitung*] devoted its editorial to it! Everywhere the "rrrevolutionary Rosa" is depicted as a holy terror. Bebel is as firm as iron.

Berlin-Friedenau, November 25, 1905

YESTERDAY I saw Kautsky and his wife. They told me outrageous stories that are being circulated about Parvus. He is pictured as a loafer, a fraud. Gorki is working at it systematically through his agents.[12] Tomorrow we're having a little conference (*some* conference!) at Kautsky's. Gorki's agent is going to present "the proofs of Parvus's fraud."

Berlin, April 1909?

RADEK sent the review.[13] I will return it tomorrow (Sunday) morning. I am simply unable to write the proclamation for the recruits. I *cannot* write popular trash—I wasted two days trying. It's not that I do not want to, I absolutely cannot.

Berlin, September, 1909?

YESTERDAY'S CONVERSATION left me so unnerved that I stayed awake half the night; even today I am completely unable to work.

As countless times before, I must again ask [you] to discuss business with me in writing and to leave me in peace in my own home.[14] I do not need the other room; I never set foot in it.[15] Whoever stays with me [Konstantin Zetkin, the 22-year-old son of L.'s close friend, Clara Zetkin, was her lover in this period and stayed in the Jogiches' flat] is put up in my room in order to keep out of that room. But in my apartment I must feel at home, not as if I were in a hotel where anyone can come and go whether I like it or not.

I cannot bear this wrangling any longer—I've asked [you] so many times to stop it. All summer long I kept moving from place to place just to stay away from the house, and now it is the same thing all over again. Throughout the summer the letters [to Jogiches] were delivered without me acting as a go-between, now everything is coming to my address again, and the newspapers, too, must be picked up [by Jogiches] every week.

I cannot go on like this. . . . I want a home of my own. If there is no way I can have it, I prefer to give up the whole apartment together with the maid and to sublet a furnished room just so I would know that I am living at home, not in a hotel. I request a

[12] Authorised by Maxim Gorki, Parvus collected royalties on Gorki's famous drama *The Lower Depths*, staged in Germany, which he was to divide between the Social Democrats and the author, retaining a commission. Allegedly he embezzled the monies.

[13] Karol Sobelson, pseudonym Radek (1885-1939), a Polish revolutionary, member of the Polish Party and, in Russia, of the Communist Party. He was a brilliant journalist, one of the most colourful revolutionary figures. He perished in Stalin's Purges.

[14] Jogiches, as a member of the Central Committee of the Polish Party, was L.'s superior. She continued to be active in Polish affairs and to write for the party publications.

[15] In possession of the keys to the flat they once had shared, Jogiches kept using "the other room" as his study during the day, leaving only at night. He kept his books and clothes in his former room and also came to pick up the mail and papers addressed to his former residence.

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reply as to whether this is going to continue because I must know what to do with myself.

Berlin, end of April, 1910

TROTSKY called on me today. He talked at length about Russian affairs and complained that Warski is supporting the Bolsheviks. He sends his regards and a message . . . that he is going to see Józef.[16]

[16] Feliks Dzierżyński, pseudonym Józef (1877–1926), Polish revolutionary, member of the Central Committee of the Polish Party, one of the organisers of the October Revolution, Lenin's closest supporter among the Poles, head of the Cheka secret police. According to Radek, L. was saddened that Dzierżyński accepted the post. "Terror has never defeated us", she said in 1918 upon hearing the news. "Why should we have to depend on it now." *Rosa Luxemburg*, J. P. Nettl (1966) vol. II, p. 731.

[17] Meeting of the International Bureau of the Socialist International. Kautsky's motion (accepted) called for a meeting of all the different Russian social democratic factions. Luxemburg's motion (withdrawn) called for a "unification congress" aimed toward unifying the Russian Social-Democratic Workers' Party, split since 1903 into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks.

[18] Georgii V. Plekhanov (1857-1918), Russian revolutionary and philosopher, is considered to be the founder of Russian Marxism. Opposed to political terror, he broke with the Populists, left Russia in 1880, and spent most of his exile in Switzerland. He collaborated with Lenin in publishing *Iskra* [*The Spark*] but generally opposed Bolshevism. In 1917 he returned to Russia, but fled to Finland in 1918 after openly denouncing the Bolshevik Revolution as a coup d'état.

[19] M. M. Litvinov (1876-1951), an early Bolshevik. After the Munich pact he was replaced by Molotov as foreign commissar. He was ambassador to the United States from 1941 to 1943.

Berlin, July 18, 1910

I AM RETURNING Win's poem, which I found very beautiful. There is no reason to wait until the whole page is set. I do not think a newspaper should be symmetrical, trimmed like an English lawn. Rather, it should be somewhat untamed, like a wild orchard, so that it will pulsate with life and shine with young talents. . . .

London, Sunday
December 14, 1913

I'M GOING BACK tomorrow morning (my migraine permitting). It seems we suffered a complete defeat at the meeting, though through no fault of mine.[17] Plekhanov didn't come,[18] neither did Lenin. The Bolsheviks were represented by a complete idiot,[19] while the Mensheviks came in droves. Kautsky (on behalf of the German executive committee) introduced a resolution right away recommending that the executive of the Bureau reach an agreement "with all who consider themselves social democrats!" I opposed the resolution, but I was entirely isolated; the scoundrel just kept messing things up. The rest personally.

Berlin 1913

IT SEEMS TO ME the article is poor. I feel very sick, and I forced myself to squeeze it out, and I cannot do any better. It can be changed at will. . . .

If the ending seems too coarse, it can be replaced by: Hands off, ye mangy Cerberuses of Capital.

Kindly let me know if the article is any good.

I am going to bed.

DURING MOST *of the war years Rosa Luxemburg was incarcerated "for her own protection." She was released on 9 November 1918, and returned to Berlin.*

She knew her days were numbered; she had neither the strength nor the will to live (she had once, at the outbreak of the war, contemplated suicide). On January 14 her last article appeared in Die Rote Fahne under the ironical title "Order Reigns in Berlin." An "order", she wrote, whose survival depends on "inexorably proceeding toward its historical fate—annihilation."

Rosa Luxemburg was murdered on January 15, 1919, her corpse thrown into a canal. Her assassins, the Freikorps, joined forces with Hitler's storm troops a short time later. Jogiches, his doom sealed in Berlin, refused to leave the city, determined to bring her murderers to justice. He was assassinated two months later.

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Vaclav Havel

The Age of Chicanery

Technical Notes on My House-Arrest

I HAVE BEEN, since the 5th of August 1978, under constant police supervision and observation. Although this has always been open and obvious, it has taken various forms as the controls in different ways become tighter.

Since that 5th of August out on the street in front of the house in which I mostly reside (in Hrádeček and Vlčic) sits a police car with two uniformed members of the State Security Service, separate pairs each taking eight-hour shifts. For the first month there was a kind of barricade of broken stones closing off one side of the entrance to the house with the sign, "*Entrance Forbidden.*" Then suddenly the barricade (and the sign) were removed. The police then confined themselves to controlling all passing vehicles on the street, not infrequently imposing fines on the drivers and in some cases even confiscating driving licences and automobile papers. In the event that the passing automobile was in point of fact intending to drive up to my house, the controls were even sharper and the visitors were informed that they were proceeding "at their own risk." On several occasions I took the opportunity to ask them what I thought I had a right to know, namely exactly what the nature of the danger that threatened was, but was only told that they had no instructions to pass such information on to me. Visitors who came on foot were similarly warned.

When I went out in my own car there was always a police wagon behind me. When I ventured out for a walk, to do some shopping or other errand, close behind me followed a policeman with a walkie-talkie who tried his best to overhear any remarks I might make in the course of the journey; and everybody whom I happened to engage in conversation had to produce their identification papers. He looked over my shoulder when I posted letters, and put his ear to the telephone box when I made a phone call.

IN THE MONTHS of September and October my observers relaxed somewhat: on weekdays there were controls only *en route*, and the full controls were re-imposed usually over the week-end. After the evening of 6 November, when I became the official spokesman for the "*Charter 77*" group, on the very next day the operatives began their close strategy again, about which (since it is a rather well-known procedure) I note only the following:

(*1*) Three men (in civilian clothes) with a car (type 603).
(*2*) When I am at home they remain in the vehicle, with their eyes on the door.
(*3*) If I leave by car they follow and park (disregarding any traffic signs) directly in front of the address visited.
(*4*) If I go on foot, or take a street-car or the city underground subway, two go along with me and a third follows in the police car. All are in touch by portable radio.
(*5*) They sit at a nearby table whenever I visit a restaurant or a bar. They have even sweated it out with me in the sauna. (But they have never forced themselves into a private house.)
(*6*) All persons whom I happen to meet have to present their identification papers, in

SINCE *the above was written and disseminated in the West, the author has been re-arrested and sent to prison to await yet another trial in Prague. His attorney has been forbidden to act in his defence, and the measures against his colleagues in "Charter 77" have been sharpened.*

In the West the protests have been mounting, including many Italian and French Communist pleas to Czechoslovak Communists on Havel's behalf. He had been invited to come to Avignon to see a series of his plays being performed, and to attend the première in Vienna's Burg-Theater (under the direction of Leopold Lindtberg) of his latest play, "The Protest."

ENCOUNTER *printed in the issue of September 1975 his memorable "Open Letter" which is perhaps the most incisive critique of the cultural and spiritual crisis of an East-European society that has been published since Czeslaw Milosz' "Murti Bing" analysis (in "The Captive Mind") of early post-War Poland.*

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the event that I, or they, didn't offer their names.

(7) On occasion photographs are taken.

(8) When I am in Hrádeček the uniformed observers return (as in August).

A FOURTH PHASE began on the 7th of December 1978. In addition to the operative in front of the door of our Prague flat there appeared two other uniformed policemen who set up a small table with two chairs and a radio on the mezzanine (another familiar sight in many other related cases). What was somewhat different in my own case is that for a while visitors, after having identified themselves, were not allowed in, and neither my wife nor I were allowed out. Only once did I manage freely to stroll out—I do not know whether it was by accident or on purpose and shortly thereafter they caught up with me in the apartment of my father, and returned me to my house arrest. What was perhaps rather special about this phase was the rudeness. Once a policeman rang the bell and said: "Today you're going to get so beat up that you'll have your trousers full, you pig!" After that I no longer answered the door and not even my wife ventured out, unless I knew that there were civilian witnesses in the vicinity, in which case the operatives behaved more civilly.

After three days (9 December) my wife and I decided to go back to Hrádeček, and a fifth phase began which resembled the second phase (at least at the outset), but after the 28th of December my anthology of police experience received an additional item. Directly across from our house a little guard house was constructed. The police car remained parked in its usual place but the operatives had now a little guard house and observation post. Sometimes they had day-and-night duties (on holidays, for example), but often only a normal eight-to-five. On occasion the numbers of operatives increased and they could be seen in the nearby woods.

Nobody was allowed into the house. I was permitted to go out shopping, and to the post-office, but not to make visits or trips of any kind. A simple walk was sometimes approved, sometimes not. Each time permission had to be obtained via radio from the operational officer in Trutnov who, in turn, had to get clearance from the Secret Service office in Hrádeček Králové on the telephone. So it was that on occasion I could only take a stroll around the house, and sometimes I was given a limit of ten kilometres (and then, of course, I was followed either on foot or by automobile). When the detail was strengthened some of them would themselves walk around the house—my private property—and peer into the windows so that no activity would escape them.

A number of new faces turned up in the seventh phase, as presumably each of the operatives in the local State Security police took his tour of duty. Most of them, with few exceptions, showed themselves to be very diligent representatives and, given the framework of their absurd assignment, well-behaved. They made some friendly attempts, when I did my shopping in Trutnov, to engage me in polite conversation, possibly to leave the impression that here were two acquaintances strolling down the street (even if one was in uniform and the other not). But, as I say, the varieties of police experience which we have been going through could by now fill a small book.

THEN the cables came. They were laid some 2 cm. under the ground, connecting a nearby house (with a good view of our own) to a caravan parked some two kilometres away. It had optical as well as aural functions, for both sound and pictures could be relayed. A woodsman happened to stumble across them, and he was transferred to work elsewhere, and all other forestry work in our vicinity abandoned.

Then came a series of cross-examinations, during the course of which all persons living in our neighbourhood were forced to break off all contact with our house, even in the event of any kind of crisis or emergency situation. Nobody should offer any help whatsoever (the vicious threats included the banning of their children from the local school).

Then, parallel to the general tightening of controls, came the new activities of Persons Unknown (PU). Even in the fourth phase—my house arrest in Prague—PU slashed the tyres of my car and smashed the windshield window. Indeed the actions taken against my automobile reveal a *modus operandi* of calm unhurried concentration. They easily managed to locate my car, parked as it was in the vicinity of Pavel Landovsky's house, where he had left it after having brought my defence attorney, Jaroslav Sabate, out to see me in Hrádeček Králové and back.

PU also got to work regularly in the cellar of our Prague house, where the telephone lines were found to be, more often than not, out of order. In the country PU activities were rather more imaginative, for when we returned there after a three-day absence what we found to be non-functional were radiators, water-pipes, and toilets. There were moments when I did prefer to believe that unhappy accidents do, after all, occur; but experts in these matters instructed me more knowledgeably that no accident could turn off boiler ignitions, or stuff pumps with pads of wool, or block pipes with tough resin. In any event the PU must have had a house key, and there would be small point in changing the lock since PU know how to make wax prints and to use lock-pickers. This must be child's play for them, they who (a few years ago) knew from my

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correspondence on which single day I would not be at home in order to make their break-in. The difficulties of repairs are, in any case, insuperable since nobody is supposed to visit us, no neighbour can help, and in any case the weather is very bad.

I WRITE THIS in such great detail not because it is of any intrinsic importance or to record any vast intolerable wrong, comparable in any way to that which is being experienced by so many of my fellow-citizens, on either side of prison bars. I write it only for my friends who might want to know what is happening. Chicanery is of some interest, and should not be allowed to hide its light under a bushel.

FOR ONE THING should be made clear: not everything is done clumsily with a heavy hand. When my windshield window was smashed, it was not exactly a thorough job that was called for; not at all. Enough visibility had to be left so that I would be tempted to use the vehicle on the road; and I was. Whereupon my licence and auto papers were confiscated on the grounds of unsafe driving.

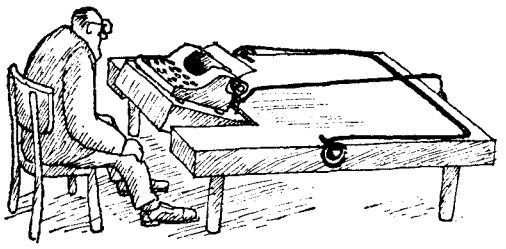
Then, after long and wearisome negotiations, I was finally given permission to take the car to a garage with a workshop in Ceské Skalice (naturally, accompanied by escorts). The mechanics accepted the job and assured me that a windshield replacement could be managed within the hour. When I returned in an hour's time I found a very embarrassed mechanic who took me to the director, also very embarrassed, who told me that he had instructions from on high to leave well enough alone.

I asked him whether this had been an order from the police, and he asked me not to put such further questions to him, since he could give no answers, and we both knew where we were living.... If, perhaps, I could get to Chrudim and buy the glass there, then possibly it could be rapidly inserted.

The incident quickly became public knowledge among the garage's employees and customers, and in the hub-hub I did get approval to drive to Chrudim, and astonishingly enough was able to make the needed purchase there (the store-keeper had given me his word-of-honour over the telephone that he would indeed sell it to me if I were allowed to make the trip). I took the new windshield window home, and a friend from Trutnov fixed it properly. A week later he had his driving licence and papers confiscated by the police—PU had dangerously loosened the nuts and bolts to the front wheels of his car.

In my own case the proper papers were returned to me after an exhaustive technical test in which my vehicle passed with high marks. On my first drive to go shopping the test was repeated, on the

Culture Under Ground



Prague

EVEN in the new "frost" some of the late blossoms of the Prague Spring manage to survive and thrive. A whole series of journals and magazines still find typists and printers and distributors in the "Underground." Only recently two new publications found their way to readers interested in the current problems of Czech and Slovak culture—Spektrum *and* Zebra. *A journal called* Ctverec *offers a wide selection of articles on the international foreign-policy problems which bear on the work of "Charter 77"; and in its first issue there are contributions from Jiri Hajek (who was Foreign Minister in the Dubcek-Prague Spring period) and from the recently-arrested journalist, Jiri Dienstbier.*

Even specialised journals have been making the unofficial rounds, for example Ekonomika revue *which publishes the work of some of the leading economists of the '68 breakthrough to critical and truthful analysis (Kadlec, Kohout, Silhan, et al.). Nor is the Underground perspective confined to the "national frontiers"—there has been steady contact between the Czech and the Polish human rights movements, and* Polska a my *(Poland and us) has collected significant reports on the problems of Polish dissidence. Notable is that these "Samizdat" publications are not confined to Prague; Karlsbad has come up with a six-page newsletter,* Karlovarské informacni listy.

As for books, some 150 titles have by now been produced by the so-called Petlice *imprint; and other imprints include* Popelnice *(Dustbin),* Scarab, Expedice *(Expedition) and* Kvart. *For the most part these are in the field of belles-lettres, that is to say, novels, stories and poems which for obvious reasons would not otherwise see the light of day. More recently even scientists have been having their say in the Underground journals, and there are a number of original academic studies now available which would never pass the censorship, short of sending the censors into mental paralysis—e.g., a study of "Current Slang among Czechoslovak Criminals" by Jaroslav Suk and Jan Frolik, which also includes a section on the language of the bureaucrats in the State Security apparatus.*

Given the resonance of this whole literature among intellectuals, above all among the educated youth, one may perhaps expect that the renewed measures of repression and control from the Party and the Secret Police will not be able to destroy Czechoslovakia's "other culture."

D.W.

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open road, this time by the Security Police's vehicular experts. I heard them report on their radio to the central headquarters that they had not succeeded in finding any technical deficiencies. Shortly thereafter, after a direct order from above, they took my papers away anyway, putting down some perfectly ridiculous reason.

In such matters the official State Security Services of Messrs Dvorak and Novotny exhibit great efficiency. In the days when friends of mine could still visit me, they had to pay a fine for each visit. In the days when I could still use the car it was not unusual to discover that a pound or so of sugar had been added to sweeten the petrol tank, the repairs for which cost something like a thousand kronor. This was, of course, always the work of PU, although the SSS had been keeping the car under constant observation.

THESE VERY mechanical details about a machine do not, to be sure, recapture the whole atmosphere in which I was forced to live during all these months. If I think about the motivation behind all the chicanery, it is surely only this: to grind away on my nerves, with the possible result that I would decide to accept "the offer", namely to emigrate. The point was put to me many times in various police cross-examinations that a passport with an exit visa would be made available to me within 24 hours. In Prague the rumour was circulated that I had already decided to leave the country. The truth of the matter is that I am not thinking now, nor have I ever entertained the thought, of turning my back on my native land.

But I will readily admit that all of the incidents taken together, the constant presence of the secret police outside my windows, the permanent insecurity and anxiety, the worry about what might be concocted for me on the next day, the wracking difficulties about the smallest details of everyday life, and (last but not least) the absolute necessity for me to repress every natural personal reaction—all of this rattled my nerves badly.

I tried to write but could not concentrate; I was afflicted with depressions; I suffered severe headaches, could not sleep, thought I could hear a strange gurgling of my own blood, and found the faces of my watchmen turning up in nightmares. The long and short of it was, I was not proving to be a stalwart hero.

I did get to see a doctor in Trutnov who was courageous enough to evict the police escort from his surgery. His diagnosis was: "neuro-vegetative disturbances."

But that was early on. At the moment I feel my equanimity slowly returning. I hope I am not mistaken, but I seem to be more certain than ever that the "fun and games" will not get at me in any (for them) effective or successful way: the making of concessions. Nor do I think they will be able to provoke me into doing anything rash or ill-considered.

ONE MUST REPEAT IT: there are in Czechoslovakia today hundreds of men and women who are having it infinitely worse than I am, those who are in prisons, badly ill, without medical treatment. If I write such reports about my own situation, and when I pen my protests to the proper Prague authorities, it is not because I consider my personal misfortune to be profoundly important, but rather because (as Patocka used to say) it is not only man's right but his duty to defend himself against arbitrary force. I take it to be a duty which involves not merely my own human integrity but also my responsibility *vis-à-vis* my fellow-citizens. All experience underlines that most awful moment when persons whom one respects begin to have their doubts—I feel that myself so strongly that it will not be easy to get me to betray my deepest convictions. Even if the "neuro-vegetative disturbances" come again.

"Charter 77": Dissidence among the Dissidents

THE "FREEDOM FIGHTERS" in Eastern Europe have from the very beginning of the Human Rights movement been walking a very dangerous tight-rope. Some fell badly, others are beginning to ask whether the high trapeze feats are worthwhile. The pressures of the repressive Party régime, especially in Prague, have grown more severe, and many of the leading figures in the Czech "*Charter 77*" movement have been imprisoned. Democratic doubts and strategy and tactics have arisen. Should the militant few make martyrs of themselves? do the People still care?

The movement for "civil liberties" began late in the post-Dubcek era, as many of the "reform-Communists" allied themselves with liberal writers in the winter of 1976-77 in order to stand up and be counted. No doubt about it, the group has had serious differences of opinion, and now stands at a cross-roads. A small group of "activists" still feel called upon to make some kind of public appearance, even though the police react with increasing controls and severity. Driven into a

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defensive isolation, they have to face the question: are they now being confined to acting on their own behalf, or are they still reflecting the general interests of the people? In some ways the régime has made things easier for the masses. Can they still identify with the emergency appeals of a few uncompromising militants? Obviously, to the extent that the police state concentrates on "the intellectuals", the rest of the country carries a lighter burden of control and harassment.

IT WAS LUDWIG VACULIK who first dramatised the differences inside "*Charter 77*." Vaculik had been a prohibited writer and was prolific in the underground press. His fame and reputation rested on his celebrated speech before the Czech Writer's Congress before the coming of the "Prague Spring" and on the notable "2000 Words" Manifesto in June 1968. He played a role in the radicalisation of the intelligentsia, and his call now is for a certain prudence and moderation.

A short article by Vaculik has been circulating in carbon copies for many months now. He raises the thorny questions: what practical value has "martyrdom"? who is served by freedom-fighters all sitting in jail?

"Is it truly heroic to challenge the police and the judges? Nothing is achieved when in a quarrel two sides continue to provoke each other to greater extremes, which seem always to be called for on grounds of dignity, prestige, or authority. The man who bureaucratically suppresses the views of others is a mere Censor. However, a Censor who is compelled to break intellectual resistance by police methods becomes a Dictator; and a Dictator who breaks up demonstrations with gunfire becomes a Murderer. So does our enemy become relentless, with no end in sight except the gallows. . . ."

The tone was "heretical", and it angered the activists of "*Charter 77*". "What is the point of it all?", Vaclav Havel asked, in a bitter and powerful reply which also circulated in the underground. "Is it supposed to mean that a decent person is not expected to exhibit heroic qualities? that he should not 'volunteer' himself for prison sentences? that all heroic or even steadfast behaviour only worsens the situation? that the secret police are really well-behaved so long as one behaves well towards them? that one should respect the 'prestige' of the Establishment and not call on the support of international treaty commitments? . . ."

One of the "*Charter 77*" spokesmen, Ladislav Hejdanek, agreed with Vaculik only to this extent: "The ordinary person does not care to get locked up." But: "Nor does he want to get spat at, or to 'lose face' in constant humiliation. There are, unfortunately, situations—and we are living in one—where serving behind bars is a necessary and proper role. . . ."

Others agreed with Vaculik without qualifications. Jan Pribram's warning was: "Potential supporters of "*Charter 77*" are being frightened away by the radicalism in the movement. Hotheads may come to the fore, and lose the whole following. It is possible that they will make martyrs of themselves, but they will not hereby become our saints, for we are being forced to suspect their motivation. . . ."

THE TWO VIEWS appear to be irreconcilable. What for one is a necessary protest becomes for the other a useless provocation. How else can the Husak régime be "unmasked" before the court of world public opinion, and attention constantly be called to Czech mis-rule and mis-government? Must not the risks (assault, arrest, perhaps even death) be taken?

The moderates plea for "tactical cleverness." The strategy should not be a constant "standing on principle" but efforts towards a slow but steady relaxation of the cramped political situation. "Getting closer to the people" is better than being "heroic loners."

Another of the moderates who are pleading for "compromise" is Petr Pinhart. "Do we always want to be catching the State in the midst of one of its lies, or do we want to work together with all those who are as troubled as we are? Are we prepared to move away from our own straight and narrow path—which for outsiders is such an impressive sight—in order in one or another particular case to find a common language with so many others who are not dissidents? In short, a 'little less Truth', or rather a little less shouting our truths from the house-tops and instead to use our energies to alleviate a few concrete evils. . . ." Otherwise, he fears, what will remain is only the demonstration of one's own unshakeable values, amid the pathos of the persecuted. Does nothing else remain for us but to remain brothers in small isolated communities, "guarding the true faith in monastic abnegation . . ."?

THUS THE ARGUMENT about "extremism" has by now taken on itself extreme forms. A few ideas are mixed in together with a great deal of temperament. But still, these are life-and-death matters; and perhaps it might be best to return to the original protagonists, and quote several passages from Vaculik's sceptical reflections on Courage and Havel's calm if very forceful personal reply.

*

LUDVIK VACULIK: I sometimes wonder if I am sufficiently mature for prison. It frightens me. Each person should come to terms with this problem once he becomes an adult. He should

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either act so that he need not even have to think about prison, or consider whether the risks taken are worth while.

It is not good to be locked up for a cause which has already ceased to stir people even before the prison term has ended. This, I believe, is what happened to those arrested for distributing leaflets prior to the 1972 elections.

Merely to court prison is not in itself an accomplishment. Just as, in a quarrel, if one participant provokes the other into a move that cannot be revoked without loss of face, it only makes the situation one degree worse.

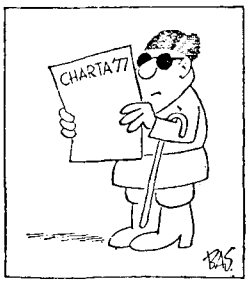
No one can give a foolproof answer to the question whether "*Charter 77*" has worsened or improved the situation, and what things in Czechoslovakia would be like today without it.

Let us stop trying to answer this question and admit that ethical motives, as a rule, are only roughly parallel to political ones—that a person gets his strongest impulses from his own character and not from his opinions. "*Charter 77*" today is something different from what it was in 1977. We have experimented, and now I come across laments that "things are no longer as good as they were then. . . ." My answer is that anyone who does not agree with the activities of groups that are still committed should take his leave quietly and undemonstratively, and not spoil the work of those who remain.

Each person attempts to develop the ways and means that suit him best. When some social group that has been threatened tries to adopt a certain internal structure and lays down more rigid rules, it cannot expect to find broad understanding.

The demand for "unity" puts off free human beings, and the majority of sober-minded people regard the increasingly heroic deeds of the steadily diminishing troop of fighters as their personal affair. I apply this to all factions, for most people are fully aware of their own limitations. In their actions they do not go beyond what would entail

Appeal



THERE has in recent months been a return in Czechoslovakia to the older and harsher methods of political repression. The security police in May arrested 11 of the leading members of the human rights group, "Charter 77." In June the spokesman of the group, Mme Zdena Tominova, was assaulted in Prague by a Person Unknown (in fact he was masked), and is still in hospital with a brain concussion. Her statement, written just before the attack, has reached the West. . . .

PRELIMINARY *proceedings against members of "Charter 77" have now been instituted on the grounds of "activities for the subversion of the Republic." In the details of the justification for the police action, it is claimed that the persons arrested had "disseminated a significant number of publications which have the effect of undermining the confidence of the citizens of the Czechoslovak People's Republic in their governmental institutions and spreading hostile viewpoints against the socialist order. . . ."*

The "Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted" is an independent citizens' association, connected with the Czechoslovak human rights movement, "Charter 77." The Committee's activities are along the lines of the work of Amnesty International. It bases itself on the existing Czechoslovak laws and ordinances, and demands that these be correctly and strictly observed. When this is not the case the function of the Committee is to inform the public. The "publications" which have been issued (113 in all) are open and public documents which sum up the facts of police raids, criminal sentences, court proceedings, and the persecution of citizens whose "guilt" often consists of no more than their acting within their officially guaranteed rights and liberties.

To accuse this Committee of "subversion" is to twist the real facts of the situation in an attempt to frighten all citizens who insist on these rights and to intimidate those who have expressed their solidarity with the men and women who have been unjustly prosecuted. Last but not least, it is intended to attack "Charter 77", which despite all repressive blows still represents the people's hope for a democratic and humane society.

At the present moment there are four spokesmen for "Charter 77", of whom three are in prison. Dr Jaroslav Sabata is serving the eighth month of his 2½ year sentence; Dr Vaclav Benda and Jiri Dienstbier (who are also members of the "Committee for the Defence of the Unjustly Persecuted") were arrested three days ago. It would appear that the government made a special point of the timing of these arrests: the Pope's visit to Poland was a moment when the new phase of repression might be lost on world public opinion.

We call upon all enlightened persons in all countries, to whom the Final Act of Helsinki is not a matter of indifference, to appeal for the immediate release of these political prisoners.

"Charter 77" is in danger.

ZDENA TOMINOVA,
Speaker for "Charter 77"

Prague,
31 May 1979

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for them unbearable consequences. Anyone who induces people to go beyond the limits of endurance in a winter of discontent should not be surprised if these people crack up. In a healthy and level-headed person, the instinctive fear of hunger lessens sympathy for someone who has resorted to a hunger strike either on his own behalf or for a common cause. "This is deadly serious", says the sober-minded person, somewhat alarmed, and he looks for a way to pull out a little.

Psychologists and politicians cannot expect heroism in people's everyday lives unless the environment is ionised by encouragement from a powerful source. Heroic deeds do not fit into life. They are special events which must make their mark. They thrive in exceptional situations which, however, never last long. A mass psychosis of heroism is excellent, provided that not too far away there are a few sober and well-informed heads with good instincts and an idea of what to do next.

I DRAW A DISTINCTION between heroism and the steadfastness of a normal human being. The normal person has sufficient inertia in his good habits and virtues; he has his firmness; and he has the will not to let all these be eroded. Just as he is ill at ease when someone is dangerously daring so will he welcome confirmation that honest work in peace is for the best—even if such work is ill rewarded—and that decent behaviour should meet with a decent response.

The main attack we face today is not directed so much against heroism but rather against what we used to consider good work, decent behaviour, normal relationships. I would even say that Heroes are allotted only rather restrained doses of repression, which the Régime feel duty-bound to provide—and does not like doing it. Because it does not wish to award the accolade of Hero to anybody. The struggle is to be waged by pseudonyms, without distinctive faces and identities. That is why ever-new land-mines are placed among the crowd. These are not intended to blow up people's means of livelihood or destroy them physically but to bring about certain changes in public standards. They are in their way a kind of "neutron bomb"; and undamaged, empty characters return to work and go on.

WE SOMETIMES ARGUE whether things are "better or worse" today than they were in the 1950s. There are many arguments to support both views. A truthful appraisal depends on what we can make of our present position for the future. The 1950s were accompanied by revolutionary cruelty and by selfless enthusiasm. Certain sections of the population were hit most harshly. Today there can be no talk of enthusiasm. Sometimes there are excesses but, generally, there is little cruelty. Groups of citizens are pressurised within limits in order to effect a measure of greater responsibility, and to induce a general feeling that it doesn't matter which group anyone belongs to. Violence has become more humane. The total surveillance of the population has been spread out more lightly on all and everything, without spasms of hatred. Is this "worse" or "better"? It is an attack on the very notion of a normal life. For my part I consider this more dangerous than in the 1950s—although it is easier to live with.

UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES the value of a heroic deed is attached to every act of honest work, every manifestation of incorruptibility, every gesture of good will, every departure from cool routine, every firm step or glance without a mask. Our adversary, in particular, must find us ready—not to die for some shabby sacred cause, but to understand its honest aspect and to support it. Heroic deeds frighten people and give them the chance to come out with truthful excuses that they are not made for this, but all can insist courageously on good moral standards in return for acceptable sacrifices. . . .

*

VACLAV HAVEL: All in all, nothing is "worth it." Neither leaflets nor going to a party (where the police are waiting for you), nor writing one's novel. And what of sending works by Czech writers to émigré magazines! Was it "worth it" to Jiri Lederer? Thank goodness he is one of those cunning heroes who enjoy only "restrained doses of repression"—after all, he need not have been sentenced to a mere three years but, say, to ten (and the Article of his charge allows this). Was it worthwhile for Messrs Sabata and Simsa to have behaved like men when they were being humiliated? Surely not. They could have ducked. The people would straight away have "understood" them better and they need not have landed among that repulsive group of heroes!

I DO NOT quite know what you intended with your little statement. But I do know the effect it has—at least on me. Taking away the cloak of stylistic elegance, its essence and conclusions probably amount to this: a respectable person does not act the Hero and does not force his way into prison. Because to be heroic is something that does not fit into society. It is not the kind of correct and honest work which respectable people like and which keeps society ticking. It is something that puts people off, and terrifies them. What is more, Heroes are dangerous because they only make things

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worse. After all, our cops are by and large decent chaps if only you treat them properly. So why provoke them with novels, and music, and sending manuscripts abroad? After all, one virtually forces these decent fellows to beat up women and drag friends into dark forests to put the boot in there! It is necessary to respect their prestige and not to be constantly invoking, and so provocatively, International Covenants or even copying and circulating, and so brazenly, statements by people like Vaculik, Havel and their ilk. For which reasons, as you are surely aware, three lads (the age of your sons) are serving time in Brno. More heroes who only make things worse!

BUT EXAGGERATION ASIDE—not one of us knows beforehand how much we can endure, or how much we shall have to endure. This is known only to your prudent portrait of a sensible, respectable man within the limits of the norm. Not one of us decided in advance to go to prison. More than that, not one of us decided to be a dissident. We became dissidents without even knowing why, and we began to live under arrest without knowing how. We simply did certain things which we had to do and which we considered to be proper. No more, no less.

Fortunate are those who are respectable and do not land in prison. But why should the two destinies be separated? Is it not often entirely accidental or arbitrary who is to be set upon and who is not? Those whom you call heroes—and you imply that they are rather eccentric—were not thrown into jail by their ambition to become martyrs but by the indecency of those who arrest authors of dissident writings or musicians who tape-record unofficial songs.

NO ONE WANTS to go to prison. If people were to follow your arguments and begin to calculate like a thief who weighs the risk of robbing a supermarket, then there would no longer be in our country a single manifestation of solidarity with victims of unjust prosecution, not a single truthful novel or free song. There would not even exist a single *feuilleton*. For where is the certainty that tomorrow they won't start arresting for *feuilletons*?

Perhaps what you wanted to say was that the quiet and inconspicuous humiliation of thousands of nameless people is worse than if a well-known dissident is rearrested from time to time. No doubt. Only, why was the dissident arrested in the first place? Usually, precisely because he told the truth about the quiet inconspicuous humiliation of thousands of nameless people.

Some of us have been in this harsh and depressing confrontation with the secret police for years now, some for a decade, and others all their lives. No one likes it. None of us knows in advance how much longer we shall be able to stand it. And each of us has the right—when we cannot go on any longer—to step back, to refrain, to take a respite, or even to emigrate. All this is understandable, normal, human, and I would be the last person to hold this against anyone. But what I do hold against people is not speaking the plain truth. And you—and I beg you not to be angry with me—are not this time telling the plain truth.

The Bus to Athens

A passenger and travel agent, Greek,
Aristedes dealt with "air—sea—land
Arrangements", chartering of yachts, and planned
Student flights and tours, mine for a week.
He gave me this, his card, befriending me
Through Dover and Bologne, by which I had
A 25% discount, he said,
On all towns and temples—Corinth, Delphi—

"What you need is what we got—decide!"
No Athenian general of statesman,
And miles from his command at Marathon,
Statathos Aristides of World Wide
Travel Services closed his case and, once
Turning round to wave, got off in France.

Martin Stokes

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ONE of the most significant results of the last general election is the condition of confusion and disarray in which it has left the Labour Party. This is a matter of considerable importance not merely to the party, but to the country as a whole. For by now the Labour Party has become indispensable to the functioning of the British political system, and if it is prevented by its own divisions from playing its part effectively, it is not merely its own future which becomes unpredictable.

Yet at the moment all the indications are that the party does not see its own way ahead, and has no clear view of what kind of alternative it should offer to the policies of the new government or of the objective by which its own policies should be determined. It wavers between vague but menacing threats, especially by some sections of the trade unions, of what it may be forced to do if driven too far by Mrs Thatcher's commitment to a free market economy, and reassurances that under no circumstances will the Labour movement use its industrial strength in a confrontation with a democratically elected government.

Labour speaks with two voices, which together express the lack of unity, and of consistent and coherent policy, within the party. Its most perfect image at the moment is the sad duumvirate of James Callaghan and Len Murray, who have taken the place of that other pair of Labour *discuri*, Sir Harold Wilson and Jack Jones. It must be confessed that, despite their many failings and errors, in comparison their successors look a little dim. In this respect, perhaps they simply reflect the decline in power and vitality of the movement of which they are at the moment the most characteristic representatives.

IN THE JULY NUMBER OF ENCOUNTER, Professor David Marquand analysed what he regards as the reasons for the Labour Party's decline and its consequence, the Party's decisive defeat in the last general election. David Marquand has himself played an estimable part in the Labour movement, and he is also the author of an excellent biography of the first Labour prime minister, Ramsay MacDonald. He might therefore be regarded as admirably equipped, both by personal experience and historical knowledge, to analyse the curve which describes the rise of the Labour Party to a position which only a year ago still seemed to make it the dominant force in British politics and its disastrous decline into the political dead end in which it now finds itself.

There are many people, however, in the Labour Party who would say that Marquand's experience and knowledge in themselves disqualify him as a detached and objective observer of the Party's present difficulties. In that union of workers by hand and brain which has always been the back-bone of the Labour movement, he has conspicuously belonged to those who do not labour by hand. Indeed, a malicious critic of his article might say that it simply betrayed the prejudice of one who resents the loss of influence on the Party of people like himself or, say, Mr Roy Jenkins, and the dominating position in it achieved by those who, whatever else may have distinguished them, were not conspicuous for their mental powers.

This hardly does adequate justice to the force of David Marquand's analysis. The burden of his argument was that throughout its history, an essential and indispensable factor in the rise of the Labour Party was the aid, assistance, and support provided by men and women who, without being members of the working class, acted as the intellectual standard bearers of the working-class movement and were an inexhaustible source of ideas, and ideals, which gave the Labour movement both inspiration and persuasiveness, especially to those who were not bound to it by any direct class interest. Professor Marquand gives some examples from the long and immensely distinguished list of Labour's intellectual and radical supporters and sympathisers. Today, alas! it would be hard to find anyone with any influence in or on the Labour Party whom one could add to that list on grounds of equal intellectual distinction and force of persuasion, and in this David Marquand finds one of the primary causes of its decline.

IN SUCH AN ANALYSIS of the causes of Labour's intellectual defeat, Professor Marquand touches the fringes, in a peculiarly English context, of a problem which has throughout its history cast a long shadow across the international working-class movement and provoked violent controversy within it. Its origins can indeed be traced back to Marx. He believed that the working class, as a result of its particular historical experience, would finally achieve its own consciousness of its existence as a separate class and of the revolutionary task which this imposed on them. When this stage of development had been reached the fate of Capitalism would be sealed, and it is useless to predict what happens later.

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Marx, however, whose thought had a flexibility which is often lacking in that of his followers, also believed that the working class, in becoming conscious of its own tasks and objectives, could be aided and assisted by intellectual sympathisers and supporters from other social classes, who, while they could not directly share the proletariat's unique historical experience, might yet achieve an insight into the course of historical development which would enable them to facilitate and expedite the process by which the working class approached its final goal. They could, as it were, give history a shove in the direction which it would in any case take. What else, after all, was Dr Marx himself, and his learned friend Engels, doing in the ranks of the international working-class movement?

Lenin, however, gave this aspect of Marx's thought a twist which for him, for the Russian social-democratic movement, and in the end for the rest of the world, was of decisive and overwhelming importance. In his view, the working class could never by its own efforts achieve the revolutionary self-consciousness which was necessary if it was to achieve its historic mission. It had neither the intellectual resources to do so, nor the necessary freedom from the daily pressures of working-class life. To achieve its mission the working class required the guidance and direction of an intellectual élite, organised into a party of professional, whole-time revolutionaries, undistracted by any other interest except the task in hand, just as he himself could not afford to yield to the seductive power of music. By reason of their superior intellectual and theoretical insight, it was necessary that the working class should submit absolutely to their direction. What this came to mean in practice was the dictatorship of the Bolshevik party and, above all, the Leninist politburo.

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NO DOUBT the kind of problem which faces the Labour Party today is only a pale and attenuated English version of the violent divisions provoked both in the Russian and other European social-democratic movements by Lenin's fierce insistence that their leadership must be entrusted to a selected band of the intellectual élite; but the essential problem remains fundamentally the same. In the leadership of a socialist working-class movement what kind of balance is to be struck between the workers "by hand" and "by brain", between a relatively small group of radical intellectuals drawn from all social strata and the men of muscle and brawn who base their claim to power, in the party and ultimately in the state, on their working-class origins and their direct knowledge and experience of that mysterious entity, the "revolutionary proletariat"? One would have little difficulty in showing that, in the past at least, the success of the socialist movement in Britain has been based on a peculiarly British compromise between these two elements in its membership. It was the kind of compromise against which Lenin declared war *à outrance*. It was also the kind of compromise which made Marx think that in England at least the victory of the working class, and of the revolution, might be achieved without violence.

Professor Marquand attributes the decline of the Labour Party to the destruction of the delicate balance of forces by reason of which the Party has shown an astonishing capacity, until very recently, to establish itself as "the natural party of government." And he regards it as a natural and inevitable consequence that the Party should have antagonised or lost large numbers of those radical, middle-class supporters on whom it has always ultimately depended for its prospects, under a democratic system, of winning a parliamentary majority.

ONE MAY LEGITIMATELY have doubts whether Professor Marquand is wholly right in his analysis of the present condition of the Labour Party. It might be that it is not so much short of ideas as that it has lost, perhaps for good, the moral purpose, the evangelical missionary zeal, which it inherited from Nonconformity. But there can be little doubt about what the actual condition of the Party is, even among those who are very far from belonging to its "intellectual" wing.

In a remarkably frank and candid speech, Mr Ron Hayward, general-secretary of the Labour Party, has recently drawn attention to the failings and weaknesses which he regards as largely responsible for its decisive defeat in the General Election. He emphasised the defects in the Party's own internal organisation, its lack of professional agents in the constituencies and, equally, the decline in the number of those voluntary and enthusiastic party workers on whom Labour has hitherto been able to depend; the falling off in subscription to party funds: and its loss of electoral support not only among middle-class supporters but among the working class itself, including trade unionists. The picture Mr Hayward draws of the present state of the Party is indeed, from a Labour point of view, a profoundly depressing one. But perhaps the most ominous sign of all is that, according to Mr Hayward, the Party has lost the support of the young, though it is by no means clear to which party or parties, if any, they have transferred their allegiance. Many of them may have lapsed into mere indifference.

On such a view, the outlook for Labour is bleak indeed. No Party, and especially one which professes to aim at a fundamental transformation

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of society can flourish without the support of the young, who should form part of its natural constituency; and it is hard to see how, without their eager and fervid assistance, new life is to be breathed into an ailing and enfeebled party organisation. Labour has come dangerously near to looking like a Party of the middle-aged and elderly, dependent on ancient and often threadbare faiths and loyalties, and content to formulate the problems of the present, and the policies with which to confront them, in terms of dogmas and shibboleths which, though they may have served the Party well in the past, have little application to the present or the future.

Is THIS, as David Marquand would have us think, the inevitable fate of a Party which no longer has at its command the intellectual resources, the continuing flow of new ideas, required to wrestle with contemporary rather than traditional problems, the onset of a kind of political hardening of the arteries which the young find repellent and by which even the faithful are discouraged? On the whole one is inclined to think that he is right, and that the state of affairs which Mr Hayward describes, though from a very different point of view, is in fact the direct result of the intellectual weaknesses Professor Marquand analyses and identifies. But, as he himself sadly recognises, nothing is less likely than that the present leadership of the Labour Party will show itself in any kind of way receptive to Marquand's conclusions.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the depth and virulence of contempt and indignation with which such views as Professor Marquand's are dismissed by those who at present lead the Labour Party. Perhaps this is understandable, because, if he is right, it is they themselves who are most to blame. Their attitude amounts to a kind of stony Philistinism, which utterly rejects any suggestion that the Labour movement may be in need of any ideas except those which it has traditionally followed.

As an illustration of the kind of hostility which anyone infected by so dangerous a heresy is likely to encounter, perhaps I may quote from a letter to ENCOUNTER by Mr Denis Healey, in answer to an invitation to reply to David Marquand's article.

"I am afraid I am too busy to comment on David Marquand's piece. In any case that kind of stale academism among Labour intellectuals is one of our major problems!"

Such a letter, in its dismissal of any attempt to analyse the Labour Party's troubles, in its complacent assumption that, as opposed to "stale academism", Mr Healey and those who follow him in his aspirations to lead the Labour Party represent what is new, fresh and spontaneous, is almost laughable when one considers what Mr Healey is and has been for many years, a renegade intellectual *du pur sang*. But even if comic, it is also enough to inspire despair in anyone who genuinely wishes the Labour Party to rescue itself from its present impasse—for unless it does one of the most essential forces in our existing parliamentary democracy will be fatally weakened.

At the moment, the Labour leadership's hopes for the future seem to depend almost entirely on the assumption that the total failure of the policies represented by Mrs Thatcher will pave the way for Labour's return to power, not because it offers a convincing alternative, but simply *faute de mieux*. In that event, unless in the meanwhile fundamental changes have taken place in the Party, it is likely to be (yet again!) as unsuccessful in government as it is at present in opposition. But the attitudes of Mr Healey and those who think like him, seem to offer a firm assurance that no such changes are likely to take place, or that, if they do, they will not be in the direction required.

It is not surprising, therefore, that David Marquand's article should have ended on an elegiac note of sadness and pessimism, and in this he expresses the feelings of many thousands of hitherto faithful Labour supporters and sympathisers.

R

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Two Poems by Ruthven Todd

(1914–1978)

The Death-Bird

Some days ago, Antonia clutched her arm:
"Listen", she said. "The Death-Bird calls!"
An enormous squall burst through the Spanish night,
Night-jar, perhaps, hoopoe, cuckoo, or unfamiliar owl.
But be that as it may, Francisco died at once
In a strange hospital some miles away.

He was a burly man, a mason,
With a shy wife, and two strong daughters,
Who coped with mail, while he attended stone;
And now he is dead, his first elegy
Sung at the moment of his unexpected death
By the harsh calling of some stranger bird.

I offer no excuse, nor explanation.
Still, last night in my bed, in apprehension
Of today, and of the Hospital Provincial,
Where I go now, I heard again the Death-Bird
(Night-jar, the ornithologist in me says)
Call not once but twice, among the olive trees.

Survive this cry and all is well, they say,
But still, in moments such as this, it's hard
To ignore the inexplicable, to toss aside
The fears which life has built, or which, perhaps,
One has inherited from some long distant past.
The Death-Bird's call still echoes in my ears.

The Parvenu

A parvenu, man now can contemplate
These, his elders in Earth's scheme; his records
Are nibbled by book-scorpions, and spiders
Web over all his windows to the past. These,
It seems likely, will continue to survive
When man, of foolishness or not, exists no more;

And wingless birds, which predate upright man,
Will stride across the emptiness, plucking
For food at lizards, snapping at the fish
Which witnessed the slow lifting of his limbs,
While crustacean and arthropod will still enjoy
The hollows and the spaces that man made

As brief visitor to their long timelessness.
Lichens, which flourished on the first-bared rocks,
Will, over ages, dissolve man's monuments,
And, in the drifting sand, under a dying sun,
The scorpion, which was first, will crawl
Lethargically toward the world's last end.

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Peter Reading

Wandering

Permit me to parley—Brigadier Peregrine
Fashpoint-Shellingem (author of *Peruvian
Jungle by Kayak, With a Kodak in Kooju,
Huskies Away!, Hottentots Were My Neighbours,
In the Bush with the Blacks of Booloo-Kishooloo,*
&c., &c., &c., &c.),
K.C.B., M.V.O., F.R.G.S.

Oh, I
know that I probably don't seem the type, as we
prune back this gnarled Hybrid Tea *Ena Harkness* and
rake the first leaves from the lawns to the compost heaps
tucked in triangular shadows of buttresses
(daily, the sun getting lower, the wall higher),
but, I assure you, the world *was* my whatsaname
(damn funny thing; can't remember the word for it).

Camped with the Indians, pure Tehuelche blood,
on the bleak plateaux of cold Patagonia,
cattle crashed down under bowled bolladores there—
feet drawn together noosed, tail stuck up rigidly.

Saw summers on the Salween when the river rose
fifty feet overnight flinging up cottage-sized
boulders like pitched pebbles, porters splashed into pulp.

Camped at the edge of the East Rongbuk Glacier,
gale reached its maximum, 1 a.m. 26th,
wild flapping canvas made noise like machine-gun fire,
fine frozen spindrift thrashed into our sleeping-bags.
Jettisoning empty oxygen-cylinders,
each clanged like church-bell rings into the East Rongbuk.

Fell through the floes with a dog-team in Labrador,
slashed free the harnesses, swam for the nearest ice,
stripped off my garments and beat the freeze out of 'em,
still couldn't last the night, had to kill all the dogs,
skinned 'em and made a rough coat with the hair inside,
piled up the dead bodies, cuddled up close to 'em,
lasted till morning, relief-ship arrived, by Gad.

Plied down the Pyrene River in wild Peru,
Indian, Quinchori, built twenty rafts for us,
bartered with five rolls of cloth, knives and ornaments,
balsa logs pinned with hard splinters of chonta wood,
spray flew on all sides up, rainbowing rays of sun. . . .

Sometimes it seems a long, long while ago to me . . .
all I can do to remember events when that
damnation Matron, whatever her name is, says
"Now then, of *course* you're a brave, brave explorer man.
Tell Doctor" (whatsisname) "Snyderson all about
nice Patagonia, *'Brigadier'* Peregrine."

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James Bond & the Decline of England

By David Cannadine

IAN FLEMING wrote *Casino Royale*, his first James Bond novel, in 1952, ostensibly to take his mind off the shock of his impending marriage at the age of forty-three. Thereafter, thirteen further Bond books appeared; by the time of his death in 1964 Fleming was one of the best-known men in England; and James Bond was established in his own right as an international celebrity—"perhaps the most famous and popular hero in the history of literature." Although the early novels were favourably reviewed in journals such as *The Times Literary Supplement* and *The Spectator*, they did not sell particularly well, and it was only with the appearance of *From Russia, With Love* that Fleming emphatically entered the best-seller lists. Thereafter, the Bond boom was not just a literary, but also a social phenomenon, as Fleming's secret agent became "a fictional character unrivalled in modern publishing history." In 1963, royalties were in excess of £100,000; in the following year, by which time some 40 million Bond books had been sold, they had more than doubled. But it was 1965 which was *annus mirabilis* for 007, with no fewer than 29 million books sold, and revenue from royalties and films in excess of £350,000.[1]

The period during which the Bond books appeared, from 1953 to 1966, was one in which Britain was often described as being "in decline."[2] At home, a changing conventional morality was accompanied by an unprecedented rise in living standards, which encouraged the most puritanical critics of "decline" to liken England to the degenerate days of the later Roman Empire or early 17th-century Spain—obsessed with sex and self-indulgence, and turning its back on the more Spartan mode of life which had been the foundation of former greatness. And moral "decline" at home was mirrored in international "decline" abroad, as the tropical African empire was wound up, the white Commonwealth was severely shaken by the departure of South Africa, and Britain's standing in the eyes of the world was irretrievably damaged as a result of the Suez fiasco. Elizabeth's coronation, at the time of the first full-length Bond novel, was a retrospectively unconvincing reaffirmation of Britain's continued great-power status. But the Churchill funeral, at the time of the last, was not only the last rites of the great man himself, but was also self-conciously recognised as being a requiem for Britain as a great power.[3]

How did those who lived through these times seek to understand their predicament and explain it to themselves? How, in particular, did popular novelists confront this problem in their writings? Recently, Donald Lammers analysed the work of Nevil Shute in the context of this national "decline", and suggested that his books were of crucial importance in "dealing imaginatively with the facts and implications of a vanishing imperialism during this period of abrupt and

[1] The complete list of Bond books is as follows: *Casino Royale* (1953); *Live and Let Die* (1954); *Moonraker* (1955); *Diamonds are Forever* (1956); *From Russia, With Love* (1957); *Dr No* (1958); *Goldfinger* (1959); *For Your Eyes Only* (1960) (short stories); *Thunderball* (1961); *The Spy Who Loved Me* (1962); *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* (1963); *You Only Live Twice* (1964); *The Man With The Golden Gun* (1965); *Octopussy* (1966) (an incomplete volume of short stories).

Also important for Fleming's views are his *Thrilling Cities* (1963), an article by him, "If I Were Prime Minister", *Spectator*, 9 October 1959, pp. 466–7, and two biographies: J. Pearson, *The Life of Ian Fleming* (1966), and D. Hart-Davies, *Peter Fleming: A Biography* (1974).

For a fuller bibliography, see: I. Campbell, *Ian Fleming: A Catalogue of a Collection* (1978). All quotations from Fleming's works are from the first (London) edition.

[2] Two important works on nations "in decline" are: J. H. Elliott, "Self-Perception and Decline in Early Seventeenth-Century Spain", *Past and Present* (1977), pp. 41–61, and Peter Burke, "Tradition and Experience: The Idea of Decline from Bruni to Gibbon", *Daedalus* (1976), pp. 137–52. Burke lists six different aspects of "decline." I have only dealt with those two in which it seems to me Fleming was interested.

[3] The best analysis of Britain in the late 1950s and '60s is to be found in: Bernard Levin, *The Pendulum Years: Britain and the 'Sixties* (1972); Anthony Sampson: *Anatomy of Britain* (1962), *Anatomy of Britain Today* (1965), and *New Anatomy of Britain* (1971).

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potentially destabilising change."[4] In particular, he argued that Shute was favourably disposed to such changes, and that his writings, which embodied this liberal attitude, might have been important in helping the British reading public "to adjust unprotestingly to a monumental contraction of British power which they might have retarded but could never have reversed." My intention is to examine the more equivocal response to these same changes which is to be found in the work of Ian Fleming.

ANY ANALYSIS of the Bond novels must begin by stressing that they are quite extraordinarily patriotic, fervently embodying the same beliefs in the greatness and innate moral superiority of England which was to be found in the work of Sapper, Dornford Yates and John Buchan, those writers of an earlier generation who were, significantly, Fleming's schoolboy heroes. To begin with, foreigners in general—although not in particular instances—are to be distrusted and regarded with scorn. Bulgarians are "stupid but obedient." Negroes are "clumsy black apes", whose women "don't know anything about birth control." The Russians are "among the cruellest people in the world"—"cold, dedicated and chess-playing." But they are far surpassed, both by the Koreans, who are "the cruellist, most ruthless people on earth", and by the Japanese,"who have only been playing at civilised people for fifty, at the most a hundred years." Even America is only a "civilised country. More or less"; and the western Europeans fare little better. Berlin is "a glum, inimical city, varnished on the western side with a brittle veneer of gimcrack polish, rather like the chromium trim on American motor cars", and Paris has sold its heart to the "Russians, Rumanians and Bulgarians . . . the scum of the world who had gradually taken the town over." The anti-Semitism of Buchan may be much less in evidence, but the abiding belief in the continuing, innate superiority of the Englishman remains. Significantly, none of the major villains is English. Even Sir Hugo Drax and Goldfinger, both of whom are British citizens, turn out on further investigation to be of German and Baltic origin.

Consistent with this, Bond himself is described as "a patriotic sort of chap." "Give him something that really matters to his country", urges Sir James Molony when M is wondering, at the beginning of *You Only Live Twice*, what can be done to shake Bond out of his bereaved lethargy. Asssuredly, towards the end of *Casino Royale*, Bond had claimed that "this country right or wrong business is getting a little out of date." But that view is never expressed again. When Vesper Lynd, whom he has loved, is found dead and discovered to have been a double agent, Bond does not feel sorrow for her: it is "her treachery to the Service and her country" that most stirs him. And again, in *For Your Eyes Only*, Bond agrees to assassinate a villain, despite the fact that he dislikes killing in cold blood, because it is necessary in the interests of the state:

> "I suppose I can stand most things if I have to and if I think it's right, sir. I mean . . . if the cause is, er, sort of just. . . . Of course, it's not easy to know what is just and what isn't. I suppose I assume that when I'm given an unpleasant job in the Service, the cause is a just one."

The doubts articulated in *Casino Royale* are never expressed again. When Bond admires Sir Hugo Drax it is because he is "a possible saviour of his country." Never does he forget that he is On *Her Majesty's* Secret Service. How appropriate is M's obituary notice of Bond at the end of *You Only Live Twice,* where he declares that

> "Commander Bond's last mission was one of supreme importance to the state. . . . It is no exaggeration to pronounce unequivocally that, through the recent valorous efforts of this one man, the Safety of the Realm has received mighty reassurance."

More generally, the novels are pervaded by an omnipresent tone of patriotism. Bond believes, for example, that "the best English cooking is the best in the world", and that the old British currency was "the most beautiful money in the world", because it was so distinctive compared with foreign coinage. And in *Moonraker*, when Bond and Gala Brand go for a walk atop the cliffs of Kent, Fleming describes the view before them in one of his most effortless and effective pieces of purple prose, vibrant with history, atmosphere, patriotism and romance:

> "It was a wonderful afternoon of blue and green and gold. . . . They stopped for a moment on the edge of the great chalk cliff and stood gazing over the whole corner of England where Caesar had first landed two thousand years before. To their left, the carpet of green turf, bright with small wildflowers, sloped gradually down to the long pebble beaches of Walmer and Deal, which curved off towards Sandwich and the bay. . . . As far as the eye could reach, the Eastern Approaches of England were dotted with traffic plying towards near or distant horizons, towards a home port, or towards the other side of the world. It was a panorama full of colour and excitement and romance, and the two people on the edge of the cliff were silent as they stood for a time and watched it all."

BUT IF BOND WAS so patriotic, what was the nature of the England which he lived to save?

[4] Donald Lammers, "Nevil Shute and the Decline of the 'Imperial Ideal' in Literature", *Journal of British Studies* (1977), pp. 121–42.

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It is, superficially, as apolitical as was Fleming himself. "I am", he once explained,

> "a totally non-political animal. I prefer the name of the Liberal Party to the name of any other, and I vote Conservative rather than Labour mainly because the Conservatives have bigger bottoms, and I believe that big bottoms make for better government than scrawny ones.... My own particular hero is Sir Alan Herbert.... And of course I have the affectionate reverence for Sir Winston Churchill that most of us share."

All his life, Fleming, like his elder brother Peter, had no interest in politics or politicians, and this attitude is precisely articulated in the Bond books. M, for instance, declares emphatically that he is "not a politician", and fears "getting all balled up in high politics. Not my line of country at all." The Prime Minister is occasionally at the other end of his telephone, but remains aloof, olympian and supreme—the steward of Her Majesty's affairs, rather than a calculating, partisan politician, temporarily enjoying the fruits of office. Only once is his identity revealed, and that is in *Moonraker* where, from the date of the story, he must be Churchill, whom Gala Brand reveres as "the voice of all the great occasions of her life."

But for all the lack of strong, party-political commitment, Fleming's England is, as Kingsley Amis once observed, "substantially right of centre." When Bond dreams of England towards the end of *Dr No*, it is a "world of tennis courts and lily ponds and kings and queens. Of London. Of people being photographed with pigeons on their heads in Trafalgar Square." May, Bond's housekeeper, will only call Churchill and the king "sir", and believes that the Electricians' Union is Communist. "The cheap, bungaloid world of the holiday lands" holds no allure for Bond, who prefers the Bank of England, with its "heavy, grave atmosphere of immense riches", *The Times* ("the only newspaper Bond ever read"), and the British Empire, with its governors "solid, loyal, competent, sober and just: the best type of colonial civil servant." In short, Bond's England, Fleming's England, is the England of Harold Macmillan, of the first edition of Anthony Sampson's *Anatomy of Britain*. And if the country which Fleming described between 1953 and 1966 was "right of centre", it is important to remember that, between 1951 and 1964, so was the electorate. Bond's England is unashamedly the England of post-war Conservatism.

Of all English institutions, Fleming most adored the Navy, and the Bond novels reflect this unequivocally. Bond himself is, of course, a former naval person, as is M, with his "keen sailor's face, with the clear, sharp sailor's eyes", who gave up the certain prospect of becoming Fifth Sea Lord to become Head of the Secret Service. Naturally, he believes that the Senior is "the greatest of all Service clubs in the world", and his house, *Quarterdeck*, is full of naval mementos, with its "treasured collection of naval prints. Everywhere there were mountainous seas, crashing cannon, bellying sails, tattered battle pennants—a fury of ancient engagements, the memories of ancient enemies...." And, before getting down to business on one occasion, M entertains Bond with his "stories about the Navy, to which Bond could listen all day—stories of battles, tornados, bizarre happenings, courts-martial, eccentric officers, neatly worded signals.... Perhaps it was all the stuff of boys' adventure books, but it was all true." Not surprisingly, gunmetal and battleship grey are Fleming's two favourite colours, and Strangeways, the Secret Service agent in the West Indies, has "the sort of aquiline good looks that are usually associated with the bridges of destroyers." Most revealing of all, in his obituary notice of Bond at the end of *You Only Live Twice*, M credits him with possessing "what almost amounted to 'The Nelson touch' in moments of highest emergency."

HOW, THEN, IN THE PAGES of his novels, did Fleming—patriot and romantic that he was—respond to the unmistakable evidence that, during the very period in which he wrote and set his novels, his England was "in decline"?

As far as moral "decline" was concerned, many of Fleming's critics believed that his work not only depicted it graphically, but evidently welcomed it,

London

Many *years ago on the BBC programme "The Critics" Dilys Powell and John Bowen were defending the first James Bond movie, "Doctor No," a modest little film, in the face of conventional abuse. "I think you're all being terribly patronising", Bowen remarked, to which the chairman, Walter Allen, magisterially replied, "If you can't patronise Ian Fleming, who can you patronise?"*

Yet [Philip French writes] *it was while Walter Allen was working on the literary pages of the "New Statesman" that Fleming had received the imprimatur of the literary establishment by way of a 1957 John Raymond review of "From Russia with Love", and it was in the same journal the following year, that he was cut down by Paul Johnson's appraisal of "Doctor No", which characterised Fleming as a sadistic fascist. The Left giveth and the Left taketh away.*

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and may indeed have helped to encourage it.[5] For the "affective superstructure" of his books seemed to them to be obsessed with "the sadism of a schoolboy bully, the mechanical, two-dimensional longings of a frustrated adolescent, and the crude snob-cravings of the suburban adult. . . ." His work conspicuously lacked "any ethical frame of reference", and was as anti-humanist as it was anti-Christian. The wholesome values of the age of John Buchan—chivalry, respect for women and for one's opponents—were conspicuous by their absence. The healthy, rugged world of Richard Hannay had been replaced with a materialist, amoral orgy—"sex, having fun, and keeping up with the Jones's." Indeed, even one of Fleming's supporters[6] felt moved to admit that the worlds of Bond and of Hannay were completely different:

> "the code of honour and the morality that bred Buchan and his contemporaries in late Victorian days did not obtain during the Edwardian and Georgian era that produced Ian Fleming."

Accordingly, the Bond books were seen as reflecting the "decline" in moral values, being both "a systematic onslaught on everything decent and sensible in modern life", and a reflection of "a world of values subscribed to and aspired to by many in our affluent, rootless culture of today." So the brand-name materialism of the books embodied all too blatantly the era of "You've-never-had-it-so-good", and served to confirm the worst forebodings of those who believed that the whole population was living "in a haze of Drambuie, After Eight chocolates, Kosset carpets, Swedish glass, Vyella blankets, Lanvin perfume and king-sized cigarettes." At the same time, their unashamed snobbery and social pretensions seemed to mirror the seamier side of the Establishment of which Fleming was himself a member, and their preoccupation with sex anticipated, and then underscored, the Profumo scandal which convulsed British politics in the early 1960s. As Paul Johnson noted with evident regret, "our curious post-war society . . . is a soft market for Mr Fleming's poison." Or, as Bernard Bergonzi put it with even greater distaste: "the fact that his books are published by a very reputable firm, and are regularly reviewed—and highly praised—in our self-respecting intellectual weeklies" said "a great deal about the present state of our culture."

In a sense it did. For at one level, the Bond novels can be seen as a sustained attack on conventional morality, and as a powerfully-articulated argument in favour of those changing attitudes towards sexual behaviour which many of his critics regarded as the most telling symptom of a society "in decline." For Fleming himself had never had time for conventional morality, as he made eloquently clear in his article, "If I Were Prime Minister":

> "I should proceed to a complete reform of our sex and gambling laws, and endeavour to cleanse the country of the hypocrisy with which we so unattractively clothe our vices. . . . I would consult with my Minister of Leisure about the possibility of turning the Isle of Wight into one vast pleasuredome. . . . This would be a world where the frustrated citizen of every class could give rein to those basic instincts for sex and gambling which have been crushed through the ages. . . . Since it is impossible to suppress the weaknesses of mankind, I would at least put an honest face on the problem, and do something to release the *homme moyen sensuel*, or *femme* for the matter of that, from some of their burden of shame and sin.

THE SAME OPINION is articulated in *Thrilling Cities*, in which he surveyed, with evident relish, some of the great flesh-pots of the world. In Germany, for instance, he found Hamburg to be "one of my favourite cities in the world", largely because "normal heterosexual 'vice' is permitted to exist in appropriate 'reservations' and on condition that it remains local and light-hearted. How very different", he added, "from the prudish and hypocritic manner in which we so disgracefully mismanage these things in England." In the Orient, too, sex was "a delightful pastime, totally unconnected with sin—a much lighter, airier affair than in the West." In particular, the Central Hotel in Macao, which provided facilities for sex and gambling, won his praise as an institution "whose functions and designs I recommend most warmly to the attention of those concerned with English morals."

At this level, then, the Bond books may be seen as welcoming the changes in morality which others saw as evidence of "decline." As far as sex is concerned, for instance, the Bond books argue powerfully that feelings of respect and affection could exist between man and woman within relationships which were not, conventionally, moral. As Kingsley Amis pointed out long ago, it is simply untrue to say that Bond's girls are

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[5] For Fleming's critics, see: Paul Johnson, "Sex, Snobbery and Sadism", *New Statesman*, 5 April 1958, pp. 430–2; Bernard Bergonzi, "The Case of Mr Fleming", *Twentieth Century* (1958), pp. 220–8; J. Price, "Our Man in the Torture Chamber", *London Magazine* (1962), pp. 67–70; L. M. Starkey, *James Bond: His World of Values* (1966); Mordecai Richler, *Shovelling Trouble* (1973), pp. 55–83.

[6] For Fleming's supporters, see: Kingsley Amis, *The James Bond Dossier* (1965); O. F. Snelling, *Double-0 Seven James Bond* (1964); S. Lane, *For Bond Lovers Only* (1965); O. de Buono and U. Eco, *The Bond Affair* (1966); A. S. Boyd, *The Devil With James Bond!* (1966); William Plomer, "Ian Fleming Remembered", ENCOUNTER (Jan. 1965), pp. 64–6; Simon Raven, "Amis and the Eggheads", *Spectator*, 28 May 1965, pp. 694–5, and "The Natural Man", *Spectator*, 28 October 1966, pp. 552–4.

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"animated pin-ups conceived purely as sexual objects." On the contrary, what Bond offers most of his girls is tenderness, kindness, affection, warmth and understanding. He does not like girls who are "in any way public property", and "makes up his own mind" about women as about men. In the words of Simon Raven, "if Bond/Fleming wants a woman and the woman wants him, then he has her—without guilt and with complete indifference to the gossip of prying neighbours." Here, for example, in *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, is Fleming's comment on Bond and Ruby, after they have made love:

> "There was real pleasure in what they did to each other, and in the end, when it was over and they lay quietly in each other's arms, Bond knew, and knew that the girl knew, that they had done nothing wrong, done no harm to each other."

In the same way, and true again to his manifesto, the Bond books constantly harp upon the romance, the excitement and the fun of gambling, the growth in which during the late 1950s and early '60s was taken by some as further evidence of "decline." For, although Fleming was not "by any means a passionate gambler", he regarded the desire to gamble—like the desire for sex—as innate, and the laws against it as hypocritical. So it is that in *Casino Royale*, *Moonraker*, *Diamonds are Forever* and *Thunderball*, Fleming's prose lights up when he describes the atmosphere, action and excitement of the gaming tables. This was especially the case in *Moonraker*, where his luxuriant descriptions of gambling at Blades Club drove some of his sternest critics to paroxysms of rage. Naturally, it is "the most famous private cards club in the world", scene of "the highest polite gambling in the world." Of necessity, "the food and wine are the best in London", and the servants "have no equal." When Bond dines there as M's guest, prior to the famous bridge game with Sir Hugo Drax, he looks around him:

> "It was a sparkling scene. There were perhaps fifty men in the room, the majority in dinner jackets, all at ease with themselves and their surroundings, all stimulated by the peerless food and drink, all animated by common interest—the prospect of high gambling, the grand slam, the ace pot, the key throw in a 64 game at backgammon. There might be cheats or possible cheats among them, men who beat their wives, men with perverse instincts, greedy men, cowardly men, lying men; but the elegance of the room invested each one with a kind of aristocracy."

To Bergonzi, this description had "an air of vulgarity and display." In fact, Fleming is saying here the same about gambling that he says about sex elsewhere: namely that it is harmless enjoyment, which should be accepted and recognised as such.

IN ONE SENSE, THEN, Fleming's work may be seen as the forerunner, champion and embodiment of those changes in moral outlook which took place in Britain in the late 1950s and early '60s, and which to many were the most eloquent evidence of "decline." To such a view, Fleming's work was totally opposed: this was an aspect of "decline" which he welcomed and encouraged. But this was not so in other spheres. For while in some ways his response to internal, moral "decline" was to urge further progress forward, in others he was anxious that the clock should be put back. For him, as for others, "the future lay essentially in the past." To an ambitious, competitive élitist like Fleming, the Welfare State and all that went with it were anathema. "There had been", he noted in *Thrilling Cities*, "periods when the liberal spirit got a little out of hand"; and there can be no doubt that that was how he saw post-War Britain. For he deplored, quite explicitly, "the increasing emphasis of our society upon not only materialism, but upon *materialism without effort*." In "If I Were Prime Minister", he mounted a more sustained assault:

> "In the United Kingdom we have a basically nonconformist conscience, and the fact that taxation, controls and certain features of the Welfare State have turned the majority of us into petty criminals, liars and work-dodgers is, I am sure, having a bad effect on the psyche of the kingdom."

Naturally enough, Bond took the same view, regretting that "carrots for all are the fashion", and venting his wrath on a working-class taxi-driver early in *Thunderball*:

> "It was typical of the cheap, self-assertiveness of young labour since the war. This youth, thought Bond, makes about twenty pounds a week, despises his parents, and would like to be Tommy Steele. It's not his fault. He was born into the buyers' market of the Welfare State."

FLEMING'S SOLUTION to this evidence of "decline" was to urge, unequivocally, that the clock should be put back. For the decline could be halted

> ". . . only, I think, if the spirit of adventure which opened the Orient to us can be *re*-kindled, and our youth can heave itself off its featherbed and steam out and off across the world *again*."

For Fleming, the most important pre-condition for national regeneration was to revive those competitive, tough, masculine qualities which he and his

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generation had learned in public school. He may not have been Prime Minister, and he may not have reformed the laws concerning sex and gambling any more than he dismantled the Welfare State. But his books were powerful propaganda in support of both of these objectives. For of course, in Bond, the "spirit of adventure" *is* "re-kindled"—"our youth" *does* indeed "heave itself off its featherbed and steam out and off across the world." Bond (as Simon Raven pointed out) is not a "pampered and privileged" figure. He has to work hard for his triumphs, which come as a result of intelligence, preparation, hard work and sheer grit. While Fleming fervently believed that Bond was in the right, he does not win because he is right, but because he works harder than his enemies.

To this extent, then, Fleming's solution to the national "decline" is to re-affirm the importance of the virtues stressed by the inter-War public school. For example, there is to be found in his work the same veneration for spartan living, fortitude, bravery and physical courage that distinguishes the novels of John Buchan. Assuredly, it would be impossible to imagine Richard Hannay smoking seventy cigarettes or drinking half-a-bottle of spirits a day. But nevertheless, Bond takes pride in being "one hundred per cent" fit for his work in the double-O section; and when he over-indulges at the beginning of *Goldfinger* with Mr du Pont, "the puritan in him" (another Fleming trait) is revolted. Even cold showers are as much a part of his life as cold baths were for the Clubland heroes, and when, in *Live and Let Die*, he trains so as to be supremely fit for action, the sense of self-satisfaction is extreme:

> "By the end of the week, Bond was sunburned and hard. He had cut his cigarettes down to ten a day, and had not had a single drink. He could swim two miles without tiring . . . and all the scales of big-city life had fallen from him."

Hannay would have admired this, just as he would have approved of the fact that, although Bond is frequently and painfully tortured, he never betrays his secrets, his friends or his country. The upper lip remains stiff on all occasions. As he explains to Tiger Tanaka when criticising the Japanese custom of atoning for failure by committing suicide, that is not the way the British do things: "it would be cowardly—a refusal to stand up to reverses, to life."

HERE WE SEE Fleming championing a return to the Dunkirk spirit and the values of his youth. And this is evinced in other ways, too. However much Fleming may have despised the conventional sexual morality of his childhood, he certainly applauded those hearty, wholesome all-male friendships he had made, and held up this increasingly anachronistic attitude to veneration in his novels. Men, not women, provide James Bond (and Ian Fleming) with "real friends." "Affection" is the word Fleming constantly uses to describe Bond's attitude towards his men friends, whether they are his superiors, like M ("who held a great deal of his affection and all of his loyalty and obedience"), or his subordinates, like Quarrel ("authority was unspoken and there was no room for civility"), or his equals, like Felix Leiter, the American agent who appears in six of the novels. "Bond treasured his men friends", Fleming tells us on one occasion, "and Felix was a great slice of his past." Their dialogue is continually that style of light-hearted badinage which covers deeper feelings, and when, in *Live and Let Die*, Leiter is horribly injured by a shark, Bond's feelings as he observes the broken, bandaged body of his friend would do justice to Richard Hannay:

> "He saw again the straw-coloured mop that used to hang down in disarray over the right eye, grey and humorous, and below it the wry, hawk-like face of the Texan, with whom he had shared so many adventures. He thought of him for a moment, as he had been. Then he tucked the lock of hair back into the bandages, and sat on the edge of the other bed, and quietly watched over the body of his friend, and wondered how much of it could be saved."

Thereafter, in every book in which Leiter appears, his meeting with or parting from Bond is the occasion for another set-piece of pathos and sentiment—the wholesome, manly, stiff-upper-lipped kind of which Buchan and his generation would heartily have approved.

In the same way that Fleming wanted to put the clock back as far as relationships with men were concerned, this was—in part—also true of his attitude towards women. For while he welcomed a greater degree of sexual freedom, he was entirely opposed to any form of women's emancipation. For Bond—who was born and educated before the Second World War—"masculine domination" was the "natural state of affairs." He sees women as indifferent drivers, unable to do a man's work, and essentially "for recreation":

> "On the job they got in the way and fogged things up with sex and hurt feelings and all the emotional baggage they carried around. One had to look out for them, and take care of them."

> "These blithering women, who thought they could do a man's work. Why the hell couldn't they stay at home and mind their pots and pans and stick to their frocks and their gossip, and leave men's work for the men." *(Casino Royale)*

For Bond, as for Fleming, these changes in the post-War world were to be regretted. Once again,

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the East embodied a more healthy attitude. Oriental women, Fleming explained, possessed "one great advantage" for Western man, namely an "almost inexhaustible desire to please", whereas Western women "take such a ferocious delight in cutting the man down to size." In the Bond books, Fleming tried hard to counter that disagreeable development.

SO WHILE, IN ONE SENSE, Fleming's reaction to the moral "decline" of post-War Britain was that of welcome and encouragement, in another, he profoundly regretted it, and sought to return to the more wholesome, public-school moral climate he had known as a boy.

Seen in this light, the books were not the embodiment of the values of their time, but a sustained attack on them. At *this* level of interpretation, the novels are about courage, loyalty, fidelity, patriotism, chivalry towards the weak and hostility towards the wicked. *Pace* Fleming's critics, the books most certainly *did* have an ethical frame of reference; but it was not so much contemporary as anachronistic. Here, for example, is Bond contemplating his mission in *Dr No*:

> "He admitted to himself that this adventure excited him. It had all the right ingredients—physical exertion, mystery, and a ruthless enemy. He had a good companion. His cause was just."

And here, elaborated more fully, is an earlier passage from *Live and Let Die*:

> "Bond had gone out on the verandah and was gazing at the stars. Never before in his life had there been so much to play for. The secret of the treasure, the defeat of a great criminal, the smashing of a great Communist spy ring, and the destruction of a tentacle of SMERSH, the cruel machine that was his own private target. And now Solitaire, the ultimate personal prize."

Justice, adventure, patriotism, chivalry, romance: it is all there. Such sentiments would hardly have been alien to Sir Richard Hannay's way of thinking. Nor were they intended to be. For Fleming's novels did not so much aspire to *overturn*, but rather to *reinstate*, the values of the world of John Buchan. As the author himself admitted on one occasion, "Bond is really a latter-day Saint George. He does kill wicked dragons after all."

FLEMING'S ATTITUDE towards domestic decline was therefore highly equivocal. At one level, his work approved, championed and celebrated the new, more permissive ethos of a post-War generation in revolt against the conventional morality. But, however much they reflected and acclaimed the moral "decline" of Britain in this regard, they also protested forcibly against other aspects of the development of post-War society, and strongly urged a return to values and attitudes which had prevailed once before, but which were becoming increasingly unfashionable in the world in which Bond lived and Fleming wrote. The same equivocation is to be found in his attitude towards international "decline." As foreign manager of Kemsley Newspapers (then the *Sunday Times*, etc.), and a man who travelled the world, he was fully aware of the declining position of Britain in world affairs. He recognised international "decline" as perceptively as domestic. Indeed, in part, the second was clearly a consequence of the first. But this time, there was none of it that he welcomed. On the contrary, in this regard his work must be seen as a determined and consistent attempt to pretend that it has never happened at all. Fleming knew only too well that Bond, as a contemporary being, must operate against the "canvas of a declining England." Yet at the same time, the novels, while admitting this, try to pretend that in reality everything is still the same as it always was.

This is especially marked in the first seven novels, from *Casino Royale* (1953) to *Goldfinger* (1959). During this period, he places England in general and Bond in particular in the front line against the Russians, just as Richard Hannay had once been against the Germans. The enemy may have changed; but the struggle among the Great Powers remains. In *Casino Royale*, for instance, Bond is helped by "our French friends" and "our American colleagues" in his attempt to discredit Le Chiffre, the Communist trade unionist who would be a powerful fifth columnist in France "in the event of a war with redland." But in attacking the Russians in this way, Bond and the British Secret Service are in fact asserting their primacy within the Western alliance. For the job is one which the French should have done, and which the Americans wanted to do. But the British get there first. "Washington's pretty sick we're not running the show . . .", Leiter explains to Bond. "Anyway, I'm under your orders, and I'm to give you any help you ask for."

THERE IS, THEN, in these early novels no trace of the reality of that "special relationship" by which Britain was effectively subordinated to, and dependent on, America in the post-War period. On the contrary, the situation in the Bond novels is in fact the exact reverse. In *Live and Let Die*, for instance, although Bond is obstensibly subordinate to the American Secret Service while in the United States, he inflicts far greater injury on Mr Big's organisation than does the relatively inept Leiter. And, later in the novel, while Leiter bungles his

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attack on the villain and is injured by a shark, it is Bond who successfully avenges him. In the same way, although *Diamonds are Forever* is set entirely in America, it is Bond who takes on and defeats the Spangled Mob, something which the Americans are too timid or inept to accomplish for themselves. Bond, as Leiter notes, is playing "in a bigger league" than he is. Accordingly, as Bond explains to Leiter in *Thunderball*, it is Britain rather than America which still carries the burden of defending the West. Peace may be "bustin' out all over" in the Great American Republic, but for Britain, circumstances are rather different:

> "Perhaps it's just that in England we don't feel quite as secure as you do in America. The war just doesn't seem to have ended for us—Berlin, Cyprus, Kenya, Suez. . . . There always seems to be something boiling up somewhere."

Thus the worldly-wise, responsible representative of a Great Power explains the facts of international life to the naive and provincial American.

In *From Russia, With Love*, this comforting, escapist theme of Britain's continued pre-eminence among the powers of the West is most elaborately developed. For in the early chapters, the Russian Secret Service, anxious to attack "the heart of the intelligence apparat of the West", assesses the relative strength of the sevices of their Western opponents. Norway, Holland, Belgium and Portugal are instantly written off: "we need not worry about these smaller countries." As for the Italians and the Spanish, they, too, "can be dismissed. . . . They are clever and active, but they do us no harm." Recent political gains by the Communists mean that France is "looking after itself." And the Americans, although possessing "the biggest and richest service", have "no understanding for the work. Good spies will not work for money alone—only bad spies; of which the Americans have several divisions." Accordingly, that leaves the British as the "best of an indifferent lot":

> "'Their security service is excellent. England being an island, has great security advantages, and their so-called MI5 employs men with good education and good brains. Their secret service is still better. They have notable successes. In certain types of operation, we are constantly finding that they have been there before us. Their agents are good. They pay them little monthly . . . but they serve with devotion. Yet these agents have no special privileges in England, no relief from taxation, and no special shops such as we have, from which they can buy cheap foods. Their social standing abroad is not high, and their wives have to pass as wives of secretaries. They are rarely awarded a decoration until they retire. And yet those men and women continue to do this dangerous work. It is curious. It is perhaps the public school and university tradition. The love of adventure.'"

So, in Russian eyes, the British Secret Service—public school, Oxbridge, Buchanesque—is incomparably the most impressive, against which "an act of terrorism" is therefore seen as the best way of damaging the western alliance.

BUT THIS ATTITUDE was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain by the time of *For Your Eyes Only*—the fundamental turning-point in the books. For Fleming himself, the single most important lesson which he learned from his world tour collecting material for *Thrilling Cities* was "the fantastically rapid contraction in our influence, commercial and cultural, over half the globe"; and the later Bond novels strongly reflect this. In the title story of *For Your Eyes Only*, for instance, the argument which Bond makes in favour of assassinating Von Hammerstein is the fear that " if foreign gangsters find they can get away with this sort of thing, they'll decide the English are as soft as some other people seem to think we are." In "Quantum of Solace", the British Empire is described as "crumbling"; and in the final story, "The Hildebrand Rarity", Milton Krest, the obnoxious American millionaire, makes the point even more emphatically:

> "Nowadays", said Mr. Krest, "there were only three powers—America, Russia and China. That was the big poker game, and no other country had either the chips or the cards to come into it. Occasionally some pleasant little country—like England—would be lent some money so that they could take a hand with the grown-ups. But that was just being polite, like one sometimes had to be—to a chum in one's club who's gone broke. No. England—nice people, mind you, good sports—was a place to see the old buildings and the Queen and so on."

Thereafter, the further evidence of national decline is inescapable. In *On Her Majesty's Secret Service*, the College of Arms is preoccupied with designing the arms, stamps and currency of the newly-independent African nations; and even Bond himself is nostalgic for past glories. M's naval stories, he realises, are "about a great navy that was no more, and a great breed of seamen and officers that would never be seen again." And by 1964, M is pictured as the head of a service recently discredited by scandal, so that the Americans are now "worried about our security." "He probably doesn't think much of us", M tells Bond when describing Tiger Tanaka, head of the Japanese Secret Service. "People don't these days." Indeed, the whole plot of *You Only Live Twice* centres on the attempt by Bond to obtain important secret information from the Japanese to which the

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Americans will no longer allow Britain access. For by this time, the theme of Anglo-American cooperation which was so pronounced in the earlier books is more muted. In the first seven books, Leiter appears as Bond's ally on four occasions. In the remaining seven books, he only appears twice. Even the Russians have come to feel that "America will not risk a nuclear war . . . for the sake of rescuing a now more or less valueless ally—an ally now openly regarded in Washington as of little more account than Belgium or Italy"—a far cry, indeed, from the days of *From Russia, With Love*.

HOW THEN DID FLEMING—romantic, patriotic, but all too well aware of the evidence of Britain's "decline"—adapt the stories of his later novels in response to this change in Britain's international position? One solution was to recognise what had happened and change the plots accordingly. So, from the time of *Thunderball*, on the pretext that "with the cold war wearing off, it was not like old days", Britain is no longer located in the forefront of the battle against Russia. SMERSH and the Russian Secret Service take a back seat, to be replaced as the main enemy by Blofeld and SPECTRE which is, significantly, described as "freelance . . . an independent gang working for whoever was willing to pay for them." Accordingly, *Thunderball*, *On Her Majesty's Secret Service* and *You Only Live Twice* are dominated by SPECTRE and, after the murder of Tracy, Bond's personal vendetta against Blofeld replaces the machinations of the great powers as the centre of attention. Even in those novels where SPECTRE is absent, the setting of the Cold War, with Britain in the front line, is not revived. In *The Spy Who Loved Me*, the villains are relatively small-time American gangsters. Only two of the short stories in *For Your Eyes Only* are in any way connected with Soviet Russia. And even though Scaramanga in *The Man With the Golden Gun* has Russian affiliations, he is a small-time crook compared with those whom Bond has taken on before. The post-*Thunderball* books are set in a very different world of international affairs to those which had gone before.

But although in some ways the later books stand as graphic recognition of Britain's decline, at another level they try to perpetuate the comfortable illusion that despite everything that has happened, nothing has really altered. The Americans, for instance, are still playing second string to the British. In *Thunderball* and *The Man with the Golden Gun*, Leiter again bungles things, has to be rescued by Bond, and is then helped to safety while the British hero carries on to complete the mission. Cricket, we are assured, "is a much more difficult game than baseball", and although the American submarines have the Mark B reactor, Bond disparagingly describes that as "Steam-age stuff—our navy's got the Mark C." In the same way, when crime and violence in Toronto gets too much for the local police to sort out, "the mounties even went so far as to call in two top C.I.D. sleuths from Scotland Yard to help them out." And the fact that Blofeld decided that Britain should be the victim of his food-poisoning plot is a further bolster to national self-esteem. His defeat at the hands of Bond only boosts Britain's position further: "when they were pushed, the British could do this sort of thing supremely well." Finally, in *The Man with the Golden Gun*, the escapist theme reaches its fullest development. For while independence may have come to Jamaica, in practice, Fleming reasures us, nothing has changed:

> "For all her new-found independence, he could bet his bottom dollar that the statue of Queen Victoria in the centre of Kingston had not been destroyed or removed to a museum as similar relics of an historic infancy had been in the resurgent African states."

In such an agreeable outpost of empire, the regrettable reality of change can be ignored, and Fleming successfully takes us with him into this world of fantasy where the *Pax Britannica* has never ended.

WHILE IN ONE SENSE, therefore, the Bond novels recognise the reality of Britain's decline as fully as did the work of Nevil Shute and others, in another, they try to pretend it has never happened. In *You Only Live Twice*, the ambiguity of Fleming's position is beautifully encapsulated in an exchange between Bond and Tiger Tanaka. Initially, Bond is taunted by Tiger with the enfeebled state of his country:

> "You have not only lost an empire, you have seemed almost anxious to throw it away with both hands. . . . When you apparently sought to arrest this slide into impotence at Suez, you succeeded only in stage-managing one of the most pitiful bungles in the history of the world . . . Your governments have shown themselves successively incapable of ruling, and have handed over effective control of the country to the trade unions, who appear to be dedicated to the principle of doing less and less work for more money. This feather bedding, this shirking of an honest day's work, is sapping at ever-increasing speed the moral fibre of the British, a quality the world once so admired. In its place, we now see a vacuous, aimless horde of seekers after pleasure. . . ."

The similarities between this outburst and the opinions of Fleming (and Bond) are considerable. But Bond replies with spirit:

> "England may have been bled pretty thin by a

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couple of world wars, our Welfare State policies may have made us expect too much for free, and the liberation of our Colonies may have gone too fast, but we still climb Everest and beat plenty of the world at sports, and win plenty of Nobel Prizes. . . . There's nothing wrong with the British people."

And to make us feel even more comforted, Tiger then admits that this is really his view too. "Those are", he explains, "very similar to the words I addressed to my Prime Minister." So, once more, reality may have broken in briefly; but it is soon forgotten.

ACCORDINGLY, Fleming's attitude towards England "in decline", as expressed in the pages of the Bond books and his other writings, was as diverse as it was equivocal. That he was aware of British "decline", both moral and political, internal and international, is not in doubt. That he welcomed increasing sexual freedom and the shift in moral values is also clear. To that extent, he found "decline" highly agreeable, and was anxious that it should proceed more rapidly. But in other ways, his response was far less enthusiastic. For he profoundly regretted the passing of those stern, upright, competitive, élitist qualities which he believed had made his country great, and had no doubt that, in part, Britain's internationally-weakened position could be explained by their disappearance and the advent of the Welfare State.

So, in the short run, he took refuge in an international fantasy world, where decline never happened, or where its consequences were minimal, and where it was still possible to pretend that St George could slay the dragon. But in the long run, he had no doubt that the only hope for national regeneration lay in returning to those very qualities of courage, loyalty, fortitude, competitiveness and patriotism which he believed had served Britain so well in the past.

Awareness, approval, revulsion, reaction and fantasy: all these responses are to be found in Ian Fleming's writings to the evidence of "decline" which he saw around him in contemporary Britain. Accordingly, it was hardly surprising that while some critics saw his work as an unpleasant embodiment of reality, others acclaimed it as a welcome escape. For in practice, it is both of these things, and more. In retrospect, at least, the key to Fleming's attitude lies in that article "If I Were Prime Minister", where he declared his views more plainly than in his fiction. As a politician, he would have encouraged sexual freedom, made gambling easier, dismantled the Welfare State, and reasserted Britain's place in the world. Had he been Prime Minister, he would have tried—surely with little prospect of success—to accomplish these objectives by legislation. Instead—and surely, much more influentially—he promoted the same causes in his novels.

Great Uncle Will

Crediting death, Great Uncle Will
Was brisk about it. Mere debility
Had brought him to this pass
He told us, after years of business.

Time to foreclose although his wife
Woke often in the early hours
To hear him whisper *Going, going*
Like a nervous auctioneer.

Another day, more visits, *Teach young John*
To keep our ledgers tidy, life
A cold, contractual obligation
Honoured by the firm

Then final darkness, settlement,
His few most precious assets
On account—provisional—
A golden fobwatch ticking in my palm.

John Mole

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European Diary

God's Own Testament?

Paris

HE WAS NOT yet thirty when he published that opening volley of the "new philosophers", *La barbarie à visage humain*. Who would have thought that after that ideological polemic his next book would be something called *Le testament de Dieu*, God's very own testament, a glowing conversion to . . . Monotheism?

The new book by Bernard-Henri Lévy is again published by Grasset where, in the series he edits, some 23 volumes have already appeared, studies of Marx and Stalin, Brecht and Lévi-Strauss, and the like. I note that an additional volume soon to appear is on Albert Camus, and that is noteworthy; for his sympathies for Camus are, in my view, one of the more attractive qualities of this vigorous young writer. It was not so long ago that Camus was ridiculed by Jean-Paul Sartre, and widely dismissed by both Marxists and Sartrians on the Left as "irrelevant" and even "simple-minded." Much has changed on the *rive gauche* since then. Hard-headed French Stalinism has gone through a crisis as dissidence dramatically came to the fore in Eastern Europe—and Camus is today no longer thought of as some minor anti-Communist figure in the past. I only regret that the new pro-Camus movement is more influenced by his occasional literary mannerisms and prose lyricism and rather less by his clear-minded political experience and his wide-ranging intellectual culture.

WHAT USED to disturb us in Camus' stylistic excesses is unfortunately now being enlarged to a systematic method, and I begin to suspect that it's time now to begin defending Camus from his friends as once in the past against his enemies.

God's own testament? I suppose that after reading *Barbarism with a Human Face* one could sense a development towards ethical-metaphysical reflection, but hardly towards an impassioned monotheism as the only obstacle to totalitarian thought, and within that monotheistic acknowledgement (Islam is apparently excluded) essentially to the Old Testament, to the Hebrew prophets (whom Levy, with emphasis on his name and religious origins, sees as his own forerunners).

In the first book there was a plea—since, as is well-known, Nietzsche reported that God was dead—for an "atheistic spirituality." Now in the second book evidently Nietzsche himself is dead, and if God himself has not been resurrected still there remains his own testament to be fulfilled, necessarily, irresistibly: in other words He has been "rehabilitated."

What kind of crisis did this young Paris intellectual undergo between his 28th and 30th year, perhaps some sudden illumination like Blaise Pascal's, which turned him from the God of the philosophers to the God of Abraham and Jacob? In any event it has driven him to a scholarly biblical exegesis, softened by an emotional pathos which leads him to write as if we were actually dealing with three testaments, the Old, the New, and now God's own.

THE CONFRONTATIONS with Bernard-Henri Lévy have been odd encounters in the Paris press and television. Young Emmanuel Todd went on and on about his own passionate convictions, mostly to do with the psycho-pathological aspects of Communism; even the ordinarily sharp and caustic Jean-François Revel seemed to be unable for the moment to come to grips critically with Levy's theological turn.

Possibly because so much of what he has been saying is not only brilliant but also quite sound and noteworthy. He points out, for example, that totalitarianism does not merely descend "from above" but comes also "from below", that the People, the "plebeian masses" so praised by populistic intellectuals, are capable of an inhumane fanaticism all of their own; that indeed the drive

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of the state to identify itself with the whole of society, and to be responsible for the happiness of all citizens, is a fearful trend; that there is at bottom a vital connection between *liberal* and *liberty* which no ideological semantics can impugn.

It is regrettable that the author, moving on to such sobering thoughts, brings so little sobriety to his analysis which is rather put in the ecstatic tones of some new revelation. In many cases what he is trying to say already has a long critical tradition, for example that Rousseau's idea of a Social Contract always carried the seeds of a totalitarian order, and he comes to certain well-known suspicions and conclusions as if they were both daring and original. At the grievous root of the matter is perhaps the Camus-like infatuation with the role of the writer as an Artist, which leads to an imprisonment of language within the sounds and colours of words, even when a sober glance at a page suggests that non-sense is being put together. Why, for example, does Lévy think that the ancient injunction to turn the other cheek must have been a shock for the Hebrews? He senses an echo from the customs of Nineveh, offers a footnote to Jonah, and goes so far as to deduce that what had been lost was the "difference between left and right"! It is perfectly all right for a young militant spirit who pledges himself to resist all violent authority to put down the doctrine of "Christian humility"; but to associate this with some conceptual political confusion about "right" or "left" is as silly as our Bernard believing he is the Saint Bernard for spiritually lost travellers.

It is not ungratifying to see large questions raised, such as "the choice between Jerusalem and Athens", but the ideas of religious philosophers like Shestov are ignored. Lévy forges ahead with his argument that the Greeks knew neither individuality nor the soul nor the inner life—that these are of Judaeo-Christian origin, and any return to heathen values must prove totalitarian, inhumane. Even Romanticism in art and letters is taken to be a heathen, anti-Christian phenomenon.

Extremes lead to extremes, and the critics have not been easy-going. Bernard-Henri Lévy's book has been hauled over the coals by the old right-wing intelligentsia, as in *Figaro* (and its week-end magazine) by Alain de Benoist and by the vigorous Breton separatist, Edern-Hallier. No doubt it will all go on and on, in yet another of those fiery Paris polemical dog-fights that have so much sound and fury, and signify so little.

It was not exactly so in the good old days of the quarrel between Sartre and Camus, and these exchanges are worth re-reading today. One can only say that the battle for and against nothing less that "the Judaeo-Christian inheritance" deserves rather better protagonists.

François Bondy

Are the Students Failures?

Frankfurt

GÜNTER GRASS told a story some time ago, and in the current literary fashion it became an anecdote, embroidered in repetition. But, evidently, there was an American student of German literature who was doing her doctoral dissertation on Grass' novel *"Hundejahre (Dog's Years)"* and she came to West Berlin to visit the author. Astonished at the detailed researches, he asked her whether she had been working at Berlin's Free University in Dahlem. No, she said, having gone out there and looked in on the literary seminar which also happened to be about *Hundejahre*. But the Seminar had begun—and this had been her signal to leave—with the introductory remark: "Well, as you can see, it's a pretty fat book. Let's settle now who has to read it, so he can tell us what it's all about. Then we can go on to the specialised work of our *Arbeitsgruppen*. . . ."

I don't doubt that the story is true, but the question is how true? and still true? It could be that things have changed in the academy, that a new cultural wave has swept over the youth, or at least swept the old wave away. Are students reading again? Have books—fat ones, thin ones—come into fashion again? Are German students turning away from pamphlets and leaflets and ready-made opinions and beginning to learn by themselves? Has curiosity come again, or are they still looking for easy evidence to back up simple ideologies?

I talked to a number of German booksellers, and they report that books are indeed being bought, and not only at the beginning of a semester but throughout the academic year. In point of fact more books are currently being *stolen* (which may, or may not, mean renewed literary interest). The librarians I spoke to also reinforced the impression that reading is now "in" again. The university dons, though, believe their students read only what they have to read, and little beyond that. But that, surely, is reason enough to rejoice.

I made a special point of looking into the situation at the University of Münster, with some 34,000 students, and the specialised institutes and teaching colleges bringing the total up to some 40,000. In the whole of the *Bundesrepublik* only Munich has a bigger academic population. But then Munich is a great urban centre, with over a million; Münster is a crowded town of 250,000. Still, the students are not a "herd of strangers", but being almost all of them from Westphalia, they are

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integrated as local citizens, and not confined as elsewhere to student ghettos.

The "ghetto" nowadays is confined to the groups of Left Extremists, here as elsewhere. There are enough of them to cause "trouble"; and most of the others look on at their militant shenanigans with a sympathetic or at least tolerant eye, catching rather late in the day a shimmer of the brightness of old heroic days of the Student Movement. But the uses of literacy take another turn, and the literary pleasures of their leisure are quite different.

TOLKIEN, I AM TOLD, is all the rage. The paperbacks sell well, and the expensive bound copies (of the translation, *Herrn der Ringe*) do not too badly either. Not far behind is "White"—not Patrick, but T. H. of Camelot; and then there are Castaneda and Lem. The time has come for fantasy, for free-floating fables. Who was it that only ten years ago shouted for All-Power-to-the-Imagination? He probably had something else in mind. Today there is a flight from the world of power, or perhaps a refuge in the real world of magic and magicians.

Indeed the Münster city librarian assured me—she watches over 133,500 books and 820,000 borrowings at the main *Bücherei*—that even the school pupils show the same penchant for Tolkien and Castaneda. When it comes to German-language writing, it is the Austrians who are preferred (so much for rising German nationalism). The authors here—all published by Salzburg's *Residenz-Verlag*—are: Peter Rosei, Peter Handke, Thomas Bernhard; and their books are ordered even before the reviewers in the papers give their recommendations. The same is true for that other

"Holocaust" in Germany . . .

IT WOULD BE *impossible for anyone not to regard the series "Holocaust", which was broadcast on the German network over four evenings, as an important television event. The high audience figures, the telephone calls, and the innumerable letters which even rained in upon the editorial offices of newspapers that were only indirectly involved, and which ranged from outrage to shocked self-accusation, put in the wrong all those who for years had credited the public only with indifference towards, and boredom with, the past.*

Nevertheless, what has been said about the triviality of the film remains incontestable. The crude penny-dreadful "Kolportage" style, which introduces every name or concept of genocide that has become popular, from Eichmann to Babi Yar; the lack of any historical perspective or background to the events which has the Nazis emerging from nowhere and acting like Murder Inc.; the sentimentality, superficial cleverness, and glib vulgarity of the film, in which the gruesome becomes entertaining—all this has caused many critical observers to remark, not without reason, that here the dead of those years were, so to speak, being murdered all over again.

AND YET in the final analysis one is inclined to welcome the whole enterprise. Because for many Germans it has brought home what happened then more graphically than ever before, and has made the horrors that lie beneath columns of statistics, documents and complex analyses, the despair and the death of millions accessible through the example of the experiences of a few people. It is true that numerous German television programmes have done justice to the horror of those times already, in a much more sophisticated way, some of which even had the same number of viewers (as, for example, the TV-film "Ein Tag"). However, the fact that "Holocaust" was produced abroad, the effective advance publicity and not least the prior controversy which flared up over the many dubious aspects of the film, ensured that there was a far greater willingness to take on the subject. Dr Alexander Mitscherlich was quite right in saying that "Holocaust" had made a break-through.

Certainly many people will feel uncomfortable, especially considering the means by which this break-through was achieved. But it must be asked whether it was not the triviality of the film alone which made its great resonance possible, whether therefore its very strength is not its thousand embarrassing moments. Is that 19-year-old correct in his assertion that the series only proves that at best one can get at the butchery of the NS régime only through factual documentation or in the poetical manner of Paul Celan? Or is one to follow the other interpretation that, when treating appalling horrors, all the higher claims of art are suspended, as long as the memory of the victims is not erased? Is there a "banality of well-meaning" which is beyond criticism? The advocates of "Holocaust" point to the unprecedented reverberations of the film and already see a positive effect in them. But does not a positive effect, which leads to a more humane attitude, also always have to do with artistic excellence? Can bad films, books, or plays make better human beings? Such considerations touch basic questions of our aesthetic understanding.

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significant trend: the so-called *Frauenliteratur*, but mainly by young female writers who do not specialize in the *kaputte Welt* but move away from rage-and-ruin to more modest ruminations over life's domestic problems.

Even the "classics" are coming in for their share of revival, although what is considered an old or classical book is some title from the early 20th century. Here Heinrich Mann is the name (and certainly more so than his brother Thomas); and he can compete with the interest in young contemporary poets, *Lyriker*, including Sarah Kirsch among others. The reviewers in the cultural quality-press have apparently a strong influence, and one bookseller told me that "every Thursday, after the new weekly edition of the Hamburg *Die Zeit* is out, there is a rush for the books reviewed favourably there. . . ." Influential, too, are the literary sections of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* and Munich's *Süddeutsche Zeitung*.

By Joachim Fest

IT IS CERTAINLY TRUE *to say that the spontaneous wave of sympathy which "Holocaust" has evoked means little taken by itself. "One ought really to howl in horror", said the producer responsible for the programme in one of the subsequent discussions; but one really ought to inform oneself and to think as well. Bare emotion achieves as little as bare facts. Surely only from the combination of both can that insight arise which would diminish our historically justified pessimism.*

Among the questions which this film has raised, we must ultimately also raise the question whether and how the current German demand for information can be satisfied. Anyone who followed the on-the-whole pitiful round-table TV discussions—the nervous way in which the exchanges were conducted; the exhibitions of self-satisfaction on the part of experts, where questions were dismissed with pompous clichés and *shocked callers were left out in the cold—anyone who watched the repeatedly exposed inability of varying combinations of people to mount a dialogue, will hold out little hope. The estrangement between German experts and the German public has seldom been made so discouragingly evident. The public's lack of interest in the Nazi past which historians and commentators have complained about for years was shown up here for what it really is: the lack of interest amongst historians and commentators in the public. It was like a declaration of bankruptcy.*

On the whole "Holocaust" is nothing more, but also nothing less than an opportunity. It will last for some time yet, and perhaps it will be exploited. The obvious inadequacies of the film could even enhance this opportunity. Because they, in particular, spotlight what many of the questions which demanded an explanation made us recognise: that sympathy may be won quickly, but knowledge on the other hand only with difficulty. And that one must come to terms not only with the terrible aspects of history, but also with its complexities.

I IMAGINE THAT everybody reads at home, for I found most of the university's libraries and reading-rooms fairly empty, morning, noon and night. Most of the activity centred around the photo-copying machine, and the professors I talked to tried to convince me that all those scholarly articles being copied were also being mastered. But the book borrowed, or the article xeroxed, was all; there was nothing beyond that; home bodies are not exactly scholarly busy bodies. One philosophy don told me he had had some difficulty trying to persuade some of his students that the books on the list which they had worked through were not necessarily the most important "masterpieces"; the figures in question were Avenarius and Wilhelm Wundt. It was rather a plodding approach, and the suggestion of comparisons with or references to Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer appeared quite irrelevant and uninteresting.

But perhaps this is all part of the tragic contradiction in the modern academy—the longing for students to study "in the old style" while thrashing their way through a Mass University. So it is that long and well-written papers are no longer expected; examinations are oral: speech may be poor, but it is at least quicker and livelier than prose. And yet when the written work is solid and impressive, the ability to formulate on one's feet in a seminar falls short. All in all, the academic achievements of the new German students are fairly narrow and circumscribed; around the small areas of knowledge they may have mastered are vast areas of nothingness.

IT COULD BE THAT this represents the swing of the pendulum: ten years ago or so every student could talk about everything, but knew nothing really, or precisely, or in detail. It also suggests a return of a kind of respect for "authorities." The students now want to know what it is that they have to master to "succeed." One philosopher remarked that if several of his colleagues up and down the country conspired to put Dühring at the head of the reading lists, then Karl Eugen Dühring would suddenly, unexpectedly, enjoy a renaissance.

What a transformation! I inquired in a leading academic bookshop what, apart from those standard texts in the required bibliographies, seemed to be asked for by curious students. The answer was a list of names highly unfashionable only a few years ago: "Husserl . . . Heidegger . . . Popper . . . Gadamer. . . ."

Marx is *passé*. The same goes for the famous Frankfurt School of Horkheimer, Adorno, and Habermas. Curious that it was the theological

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bookshop (Herder) that alone registered a demand for these books. The *Asta* chairman of the Student Union confirmed, rather sadly, that it was only in the theological faculty that there was still talk about Jürgen Habermas or Ernst Bloch. I asked a few professors about facts and figures, and this statistic was revealing—a Seminar on the subject of the Young Marx: 15 members—a Seminar (with the same *Dozent*) on Nietzsche: 115 members. And even our friends at the herder bookshop are beginning to feel the cold wind; they initiated an entire section only a few years ago on "Socialisation Theory" and "Socio-Linguistics." As the manager said to me, "Now I might as well toss all the stock into the rubbish bin. . . ."

MY FINAL CONCLUSION was that students don't really read very much; they read what they have to read, diligently and conscientiously. They go through all the motions, and cracking a book or two belongs to the duties, if not pleasures, of the day. As the students complained to me, "We just don't have *time* to read. . . ." And when I asked: What about evenings, or over the week-ends, the usual answer amounted to this: "But that's just not on! I can't simply sit around evenings in my bed-sitter and read! There's so much going on, I don't want to miss anything. . . ."

Evenings are the time for *"Kommunikation"*, or as the American students used to call it: "rapping." To get to know the others, to talk with them, that's the most important thing. After that comes *"Reisen"*, travelling; and what else was the point of the wearisome money-making jobs? Talk and travel come under the category of "Life." The student wants, above all, to "live", and that is seen in sharp contrast to "studying."

The Mass University is full of lonely tacticians, each struggling to find his way to uncertain prospects. A good pupil in literature and history chooses physics, or vice versa, as the millions of students try their cross-country runs across unmapped fields of a new society. Everybody knows something useful, hears something that might make him or break him. I watched them in the university cafeterias and dining rooms. They seemed to be staring out into space, over their knives and forks and plates; and I felt it would be awkward, even anomalous, if some one tried to make contact with them. Everybody is "into" talking, "into" communicating; everybody these days says *du* to each other. But it is like some herd of lonely spirits.

Where are our educational reformers now? Do they ever try to make a balance-sheet of what they have achieved with the Mass University? Was not Higher Education supposed to be transformed from careerism-for-an-élite to general-culture-for-all? If one looks about there do not seem to be very many careers, or very much culture, "for all." As one German professor candidly remarked, *"Die Dummen dabei, wahrhaftig, sind die Studenten. . . .* It's not the students who are failures—we in the new academy have failed *them*. . . ."

Jürgen Busche

Brecht's Schweik

West Berlin

BRECHT took many a wrong turn, and this was a very wrong turning indeed! He thought he could take that picaresque hero in Jaroslav Hasek's *Good Soldier Schweik* right out of its original scoundrel time, the rather *gemuetliche* context of the creaking Habsburg Empire and put him into the Prague of the evil *SS*-Heydrich period, out of World War I into World War II. It was an unfortunate long-distance inspiration in the period of Brecht's unhappy Hollywood exile, and it could never work.

A Schweik was still possible in 1914–1918, but simply inconceivable in the holocaust of the Second World War. One of the least of his brazen remarks would have cost the rascal his head. That peculiar form of resistance through absurd and hypocritical acclamation, Schweik's very own cunning and wit, had simply lost its historic practicability. Brecht was overwhelmed by his mood of hate and fear of Nazi Germany, and it was just not on to confront tricky little Schweik with the bloodthirsty monsters of the Third Reich, the Hitlers and Himmlers and Goerings and their ruthless adjutants. These were no laughing matters, and there could be no joke in any of it. Ingenious borrower though he was, Brecht erred here, badly and thoroughly.

Why then is Brecht's *Schweik* play still being put on. It was first produced in post-War Germany some 25 years ago by Harry Buckwitz, that indefatigable Brecht director; and he has gone on to give it at least six different *Inszenierungen* in

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various European theatres since then. Now in the Schiller-Theater in Berlin he has tried again, and the effect is as weak and as helpless as ever. Perhaps more so, because the farther we are removed from the time of its conception—a manuscript of Europe's darkest days, composed in the California sunlight—the thinner becomes the whole revision of the Czech masterpiece.

How can an actor, no matter how subtly comic, playing Schweik deal with the farcical character who has to face up to the real deviltries of the *SS*—how can we grin at him when he should be shaking in his boots? I could not bring myself to have any fun here; the whole evening was sour. Even the imaginative Czech designer, Josef Svoboda, could not help where there is no room for either fear or fantasy; nor do Hanns Eisler's songs help things along.

I do not mean to suggest that one should not perform plays that may happen to be lacking in basic truth and authenticity; only that if one (as do the Brechtians) wants to persist, then some new idea or conception has to be added to a vehicle which by itself is not strong enough to carry persuasion on the stage. I am not quite sure, but perhaps then *Schweik* could be done, possibly be carried off with some contemporary spirit and energy and insight. Harry Buckwitz, who has had so many theatrical triumphs with Brecht's more workable plays, offers very little new.

A last sad note about the Berlin première. If Brecht even when he was weak and erratic, was rarely so insignificant as this, the most depressing aspect of the affair is that the audience didn't appear to notice it. There was no discernible critical reaction, usually a familiar Schiller-Theater strategem on such misguided occasions, only the applause of a rather mindless good-will. Could it be that not only old Prague but also new Berlin is no longer what it used to be?

Friedrich Luft

We Too Are Europe

Paris

SOME talk about "Eastern Europe", but others no doubt would prefer some such formula as "Western Asia." Surely that would be good enough for the Russia of the samovar and of Stalinism. The whole history of what has happened in that country of bears and snow, and the Slav soul and the Great terror surely cannot happen here, protected as we are by the traditions of our democracies, the level of our technology, the strength of our social institutions. The average Western image of distant Russian exoticism does not seem to have changed since the days of Peter the Great: you only have to look at those jars of caviar or those bottles of "Malossol" cucumbers (with the domes of Orthodox churches engraved on the label), or the *mouzhik* with staring eyes and bristling beard on the poster for those ubiquitous restaurants named after Rasputin, or the two-headed eagle which icily adorns those fine bottles of "Imperial Vodka." Tourist souvenir shops and East-West trade fairs reinforce this prejudice, with their *matrioshkas,* pseudo-folkish Russian dolls, and imitation ikons.

Not a few of the Russians who have over the century come West do their utmost to sustain these illusions. They curse the "recent innovations" of Peter the Great and propose not to rebaptise Leningrad as Petersburg but Petersburg as Nevgrad—to erase the memory even of the name of the accused Westernising autocrat. They deplore the fall of the Russian Empire and lay the blame on "the intelligentsia"—they were the ones who impelled an irresponsible liberalism to overturn the thousand-year State, without a care about what could be done in the ruins. They have had this yearning to restore the throne of the Czars, along with the Byzantine Church of "The Third Rome." The Russian *ayatollahs* are even more archaic than their Iranian equivalents: it is not an Islamic republic they wish to set up, but an Orthodox monarchy.

DESPITE ALL THESE medieval phantoms, *nous aussi, nous sommes l'Europe,* we are Europe, and we always have been. In the era when the French still knew nothing about their German neighbours, let alone Russia, there were Russians who were discussing German philosophy, French theatre, and Florentine painting. Russian culture is unimaginable without the Kremlin's Italian spires, the cathedral of St Isaak and the Alexandrine Column in Petersburg (built by the Frenchman Montferrand), without the *ottava rima* inherited from Tasso by Paul Katenin and Alexander Pushkin, the *alexandrine* borrowed from French poetry by Sumarokov, the iambics borrowed from Barbier by Lermontov and the dramatic blank verse modelled in Russian on English and German originals (Shakespeare, Goethe). . . . Of course the *balalaika* strums on and on, but music is also the violin, piano, organ, cello, and all the instruments needed to interpret Tchaikovsky and Shostakovich.

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And is it possible to imagine the novels of Proust and Thomas Mann, Hermann Hesse and Moravia without the prose of Dostoevsky and Tolstoy? or Western theatre without the plays of Chekhov? or 20th-century painting without Kandinsky, Soutine, Malevich, Larionov and Chagall?

The "unity of European culture" is a self-evident fact: and without Russia it would not exist. This unity is due to common sources: Greek and Roman antiquity, Judaism and Christendom, the interactions of European nations. There would be no Brecht without Meyerhold, but also no Lyubimov without Brecht. Marius Petipa was one of the creators of Russian ballet who later exerted a strong influence on Maurice Béjart and the whole of modern choreography. Kandinsky revolutionised the pictorial art of the West; but the Soviet nonconformist painters of our own day draw their inspiration more from the Russian master's French disciples than from his own paintings, not to be seen in Soviet museums. Thirty-three years ago, talking to the Germans just after the fall of Nazism, T. S. Eliot said:

> "For the health of the culture of each country should be unique, and that the different cultures should recognise their relationship to each other, so that each should be susceptible of influence from the others."

Eliot put the cardinal difference between culture and politics in a definitive manner: Culture unites mankind, politics divides. . . .

"Culture" is in a way the religion of our time, religion in the etymological sense of the word. Today it is indeed culture which creates the supreme binding force of humanity, not religious affiliations as such, which (like politics) can only disunite: the *ayatollahs* of all our Churches prove this daily. Religions attack and deny one another, just as social doctrines and political parties do. They may well find a *modus vivendi,* but they will never go further than a *détente*-like fragile balance conditioned by a certain stalemate of physical forces. The unity of culture goes beyond political, military, or religious differences; the absolute of art transcends any hegemonism.

THE NEW POLITICAL EUROPE is going to be constituted without the so-called "Eastern" countries and without Russia. But *l'autre Europe*, the true one, the Europe of culture, is unthinkable without the eastern part which belongs to it by the very nature of things. It is the one truly indestructible "International" which stands against the centrifugal forces of political ideologies, which enables us to surmount the atomisation of the modern world and to transform the mass of personal and national egoisms into a living organism, the European spirit. To conclude, I will quote another of T. S. Eliot's remarks, even more immediate now than when he said it in 1946:

> "We may hold very different political views: our common responsibility is to preserve our common culture uncontaminated by political influences. . . ."

Efim Etkind

Yugoslavia in Danger

Belgrade

SOVIET POLICY towards Yugoslavia has not essentially changed since the Second World War. The only significant changes have been in strategy. The Soviet Union's policy is a characteristic example of the behaviour of an expansionist power towards unstable states and politically sensitive zones. The geopolitical position of Yugolsavia, which holds the key to the north-east Mediterranean, makes the Soviets all the more determined—while the sensitivity of the Yugoslavs over their independent status is forcing the Kremlin to adopt a subtle approach to the problem.

In addition, a heavy strain has been put on Yugoslav–Soviet relations by their ideological similarities and differences—and this is further increased by the differences and contradictions within the ranks of those independent "bloc-free" states.

During the last War the Soviet government sought to avoid disputes with its allies over the Yugoslav question—above all with Great Britain. But at the same time the Soviets were anxious not to weaken the pro-Communist revolutionary forces or reduce their own influence on this movement. For this reason Stalin readily agreed to Churchill's proposal for a Yugoslavia divided "fifty-fifty" between them into two equal spheres of interest.

When I visited Great Britain in 1951, Churchill told me that they negotiated at the time over a division of "spheres of influence" but not of territory. It must have been clear even to an inexperienced politician (and most certainly to Stalin) that British influence in Yugoslavia would evaporate with the abolition of private property, of the monarchy and the bourgeois parties.

After the War the Yugoslav Communists were so militant and orthodox that they sometimes

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became an embarrassment even to the Soviets (during the Greek uprising, for example). But although at that time the Yugoslavs were copying the Soviet Union in a big way and were showing more loyalty to Moscow than was really demanded of them, they nevertheless preserved their organisational, party-political, and national independence, and their revolutionary tradition.

This independence was a product of the Yugoslav revolution. The Yugoslavs were indeed receiving crucial aid from the Soviet Union before the end of the War, but their liberation was essentially the result of their own efforts and sacrifices.

STALIN and the new privileged ruling forces of Soviet imperial power could not understand or accept this simultaneous loyalty and independence of the Yugoslavs. In 1948 a conflict broke out between the USSR and Yugoslavia which had already been smouldering for a long time. It revealed to the whole world that the most important form of expansion for the Soviet state consisted in the exploitation of revolutionary, national, and social movements.

Of course, this need not remain the most important form in the future. It is already becoming evident that direct military action could replace it on a world-wide scale.

BUT THE SOVIET ACTION against Yugoslavia in 1948 would not have assumed greater dimensions if there had not also been deeper causes for it. The subjugation of the states of Eastern Europe—which at that time had a semi-dependent, officially "independent" status and wanted to develop their own forms of socialism—was not possible without smashing Yugoslavia or at least bringing it to heel.

Yugoslavia was (and still is today in many respects) the most pressing and acute problem facing the Soviet government within the greater problem of subjugating the countries of Eastern Europe. The measures Moscow took against Yugoslavia were a precondition for this subjugation and at the same time a means of implementing it.

Stalin underestimated the spirit of resistance of the Yugoslav Party, but not that of the East European parties. Their leaders had achieved power through the victories of the Red Army and were in every respect under direct Soviet control.

The spiteful fury and ruthlessness of Stalin's attack on Yugoslavia together with the monstrous show-trials in Eastern Europe provoked both unrest and resistance in the Communist movement—privately at first, but then also openly after Stalin's death. The decay of Communism as a uniform world movement had begun. More than that: this saw the beginning of the moral and intellectual divergence within the national Communist Parties, first in Europe, but then later also elswhere.

The Yugoslav Communist Party overcame the ideological crisis and began reviewing its fossilised Leninist–Stalinist values. The Soviet régime was defined by the Yugoslavs as "state-capitalist." The Soviet annexation of the Baltic states and of Eastern Europe was condemned as "imperialist" and "hegemonist", and the absolute power of the secret police branded as a betrayal of socialism and democracy. Admittedly there were still no internal reforms in Yugoslavia then. But the break with the Soviet Union which seemed radical at the time raised hopes within the country and opened new perspectives.

IN THE KHRUSHCHEV ERA the Yugoslav leadership gradually changed its views of the Soviet Union, views they had arrived at through mistakes and illusions, by way of painful self-analysis. Even now it was still only a question of a dogmatic—though significant—revision. The Soviet system was no longer classified by the leaders in Belgrade as "state-capitalist", but once more as "socialist." All the same they no longer idealised the Soviet system as they had done before the conflict in 1948.

At the same time, however, the "revisionist" democratic trends within the league of Yugoslav Communists were suppressed. The Soviet Union ended its direct ideological and physical threats towards the Yugoslav state. In return the Yugoslav leadership stopped its ideological criticism of the Soviet Union. Moscow half-heartedly recognised Stalin's mistakes and the right of Yugoslavia to national sovereignty. But Tito approved Soviet intervention in Hungary in 1956.

One must, however, add that despite considerable ideological and political concessions to Khrushchev and the Soviet state, the Yugoslavian leadership never for a moment abandoned or weakened its national independence.

ALTHOUGH Yugoslavia is also a "Party state", Tito carefully avoided identifying Party relations with those of the state in his dealings with the Soviet Union. He permitted a *rapprochement* and even an identification of policy in the ideological, party-political sphere—while constantly emphasising "national independence" and "equality of status." He thereby created for himself greater room for manoeuvre within the framework of Communism, and prevented Soviet interference in the internal affairs of Yugoslavia.

Thus Yugoslavia remained outside the Soviet

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"Socialist Community" and seized the initiative for a policy of freedom from the Eastern bloc. The Yugoslav Party accepted, even if hesitantly and without enthusiasm, the collaboration initiated by the Soviet Party at international Communist conferences. But the Yugoslav state remained watchful and jealous in matters concerning its own sovereignty.

At the same time the Yugoslav leaders suppressed and demobilised the internal forces of an active and creative resistance against Soviet "Socialism", especially against the remnants of the Soviet model in Yugoslavia.

IDEALISM AND OBSESSION WITH POWER are two characteristics which every revolution carries within itself until it has achieved victory. "Communist" revolutions express these characteristics in their own particular way even after achieving victory. The devout, dogmatic elements experience disappointment or lose their way in mistaken heresies. But the pragmatic, active and politically mobilised party bureaucracy transforms itself into a privileged class. This class is not democratic or drawn from the people. Admittedly it does have its own "ideals" and interests. For these—and only for these—is it prepared and able to fight and to "reform" itself accordingly.

The Yugoslav revolution and its ruling élite are, of course, different to those in other Communist countries—but only in so far as they attained power under different circumstances. Once the threat had disappeared after Stalin's death any democratisation and democratic divergence from the Soviet Union became superfluous or even dangerous for this élite.

The party bureaucracy underlined this final admission of its own undemocratic nature by distorting the democratic elements from the period of the struggle against Stalin—the "workers' councils" and "self-administration"—and forcing them into a totalitarian framework. Over against "bourgeois" democracy and liberalism they set the self-governing "One-Party democracy." Party and State power were concentrated in a small leading group in which Tito's personality had been dominant from very early on. Tito's prestige and role were so great that the democratic elements did not threaten him directly. But they threatened the whole structure—and therefore, indirectly, Tito's dominant role in the long run. After cautiously biding his time and observing, Tito acted before the opposition forces had a chance to muster.

THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP of the Khrushchev era seemed to suffer "pangs of conscience" on account of Stalin's attacks on Yugoslavia. But these pangs of conscience were not so great as to prevent the Moscow leadership from criticising Yugoslavia and insisting that it must return to the Soviet orbit of power. On the other hand, the Yugoslav leadership did not abandon the hope and the aim of exploiting this situation in order to strengthen its influence and prestige in the Communist world and especially in Eastern Europe.

But nothing came of it. Neither did the Soviets mend their ways, nor did the Yugoslavs develop into shining examples of virtue. The game continued in a world in which the stronger and not the more clever power held the advantage. It would be wrong to call these internal and external changes in Yugoslavia "mistakes." They are undoubtedly mistakes when considered in the context of long-term national state interests. But seen from the standpoint of the ruling monopolist élite they are essential and "necessary" changes which conform to the amoral, ideologised consciousness and to the historical interests of this élite.

The weakening (but not, of course, the total disappearance) of ideological similarities and the extension of national and economic connections between the two countries are characteristic of the Soviet Union's relations to Yugoslavia in the Brezhnev era. The Yugoslav "mixed economy" is dependent on Western technology, but also on Eastern raw materials and Eastern markets. Ideological deceit and wrangling have served and still continue to serve both sides, the Soviets and the Yugoslavs, by concealing their real differences and contradictory aims.

EVERY TWO OR THREE YEARS rumours spread in and around Yugoslavia about a Soviet intervention. There have been two really critical moments: the intervention of the Soviet Union in Czechoslovakia in 1968; and the present, openly voiced claims of Bulgaria to the Yugoslav part of Macedonia.

The Yugoslav leaders consoled themselves over Czechoslovakia all the more easily since they themselves were threatened by national, chiefly Croatian aspirations and liberationist tendencies. When this crisis was at its peak in the summer of 1971, Brezhnev offered Soviet "aid" to the Yugoslavs. The Yugoslavs accepted in the communiqués issued from the meetings of Tito and Brezhnev in 1971–2. They accepted the formula of "Soviet internationalism" (in practice that meant Soviet hegemony) together with "mutual adherence" to the teachings of Marx and Lenin.

But Yugoslav hopes are vain for an easing of Bulgarian escalation over the question of Macedonia. On the contrary: everything points to a further increase of tension. The reason for this is that the issue is just one part of a larger chain of

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events which have very little to do with Yugoslavia, despite its "leading" role amongst the "Bloc-free" countries. The issue is simply part of the world-wide strategy of the Soviet Union. This strategy has little to do with Bulgaria (the Bulgarian leaders are utterly subservient to the Soviet Union).

MEANWHILE a fundamental, and irreparable split has occurred among the "Bloc-free" countries. The situation of Yugoslavia has also been considerably weakened by this, because its foreign policy was based on the presumed unity and solidarity of these states. Objectively, this union only existed in "anti-imperialist" and "anti-racialist" pronouncements. The majority of the countries independent of the Eastern bloc adopted a passive (if not positive) attitude towards Cuban intervention in Africa.

Belligerent conflicts have broken out between Bloc-free states, and one should anticipate that even more disputes will flare up among them. The pro-Soviet and Communist states which claim to be "outside the bloc" have seized the initiative in the movement. The countries truly independent of the bloc, undeveloped and for the most part disorganised, have become the most fruitful territory for Soviet penetration. The Communist and pro-Soviet governments which claim to be "outside the bloc" are becoming the vectors and instruments of Soviet influence and Soviet expansion.

THE YUGOSLAV LEADERS are deceiving themselves—and deceiving their people—about the transitory character of these phenomena. Yugoslav policy towards Soviet expansion in the Balkans only looks more clearly defined from outside. The Yugoslavs indulge in polemics with the Bulgarians, but are silent about their patrons and about those who are actually encouraging Bulgarian claims to Macedonia.

But the prospects of the Soviet leaders in the Balkans are only at the preliminary stage, given the lack of any vital commitment from the West, the threat to Rumanian independence, the changes in Iran, and the internal instability of Turkey and Italy. Is there a possibility of Bulgaria becoming a Balkan Viet Nam? And, due to its ideological purism, won't Albania be encouraged to take action on its own behalf rather than to hold back?

Outwardly the position of Yugoslavia has stabilised. But this only appears to be the case, because both externally and internally Yugoslav policy has deteriorated. This is even more true of foreign policy than it is of domestic policy. They are still avoiding any basic criticism and analysis of the expansion of the Soviet Union. In present-day Yugoslavia one is greatly reminded of the lying self-deception of Imperial Yugoslavia towards Hitler's expansionism.

THE SOVIET LEADERSHIP cannot afford to take action against Yugoslavia openly. Ideological gullibility towards the Soviet Union, the intensive "Marxist"—basically Leninist—indoctrination, the gagging of any kind of criticism and certainly of any opposition: this in itself undermines morale and facilitates Soviet penetration; especially during times of international tension and internal economic and political difficulties.

The old Stalinist adherents of the USSR (the so-called "Cominformists") are scattered and without influence. Even the Soviet leaders have distanced themselves from them and have called them "imperialist *provocateurs*." But that does not mean that "new" pro-Soviet saviours of "Socialism" will not emerge the moment a crisis starts to build up. In the top echelons of the country there are those who take good care not to speak their minds, not to commit themselves on sensitive and unsettled internal questions. Likewise, not just out of mere coincidence, they avoid any criticism of Soviet expansion, although Yugoslavia is directly threatened by it.

Time is now no longer on the side of Yugoslavia. The Soviet Union, therefore, has good reason to be patient, single-minded, and cautious as it prepares for its future in the Balkans and in Yugoslavia. This is exactly what it is now doing.

Milovan Djilas

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Dull Beyond Description

On Florence & Thomas Hardy—By PHILIP LARKIN

"A SUBJECT for a short story: a world-famous writer in his sixties, married to a hostile and eccentric wife, meets a young woman who is infatuated with literature. They meet secretly, she helps him with his books. The wife dies and they marry, but the writer, tormented by remorseful memories, re-creates his former love in a sequence of poignant poems, neglecting his second wife to do so." Certainly it is a story for Hardy rather than Trigorin, and the fact that it is Hardy's own story need not surprise us. A writer's life dictates his books: unless its pattern changes, he will ultimately seem to be re-enacting them. What is surprising is that he should so often be unaware of the fact.

But another writer had already seen the potentialities of the situation: "I am asked to write my reminiscences of a famous novelist, a friend of my boyhood, living at W. with a common wife, very unfaithful to him. There he writes his great books. Later he marries his secretary, who guards him and makes him into a figure. My wonder whether even in old age he is not slightly restive at being made into a monument." From this note grew Somerset Maugham's *Cakes and Ale*, the publication of which in 1930 upset the second Mrs Hardy very much.

As the present authors point out,[1] Maugham later denied that in creating Edward Driffield he was thinking of Thomas Hardy any more than of George Meredith or Anatole France; in any case, *Cakes and Ale* is primarily about literary reputation, and not the analysis of a human relationship. Nevertheless, up to the publication of Robert Gittings's two-volume life of Hardy in the Seventies the average reader's view of Hardy's marriage to his second wife was much as Carl J. Weber had portrayed it in 1940. After the antipathies of his first marriage to "Dearest Em", Hardy had been taken over by the quietly-managing Florence, who kept away unwelcome visitors ("Florence is my chucker-out") and gave him the peace of mind to write his last five volumes of verse. It is an agreeable picture, and really not so different, except in tone, from the one Maugham drew. *The Older Hardy* revealed that the picture had been less agreeable for Florence Hardy herself.

Inevitably *The Second Mrs Hardy* repeats much material from the earlier book, and in consequence the reader tends to concentrate on areas that are new to him, or that have been left unexplained. Florence Dugdale was one of five daughters of the headmaster of a National School in Enfield who by slow and painful degrees became a teacher there. A melancholy and ailing young woman, she found teaching irksome, though she stuck it for over ten years and was popular with the young ones. She was much happier writing a children's column for the *Enfield Observer*, or talking to the Enfield Literary Union on Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, or helping a local poet, A. H. Hyatt, compile pot-boiling anthologies; by a strange irony (the first of many), Hyatt published a selection from Hardy in 1906, and Florence received two letters from him about its preparation. Hyatt was poor and tubercular, but Florence loved him: one might say it is the only real love affair in the book. He was, she said, "the only person who ever loved me, for I am not lovable." When he died in 1911, she wrote that he had been "more to me than anything in the world", and added that she would gladly have given the rest of her life for one brief half-hour with him. She was 32 then, and the affair must have strongly reinforced her temperamental sadness; it is said that Hardy found her agnosticism sympathetic, but her melancholy must have pleased him as much (Hardy's sister Kate said that she "never saw two such dismal critters").

How did they meet? Here uncertainty persists. In *Young Thomas Hardy* it is said that Mrs Henniker introduced them in 1904, but in *The Older Hardy* the meeting is put "somewhere and somehow in London in the summer of the year 1907"; in the present book this is accepted, and the authors say that Hardy introduced Florence to Mrs Henniker in 1910. Certainly Hardy was in London in the spring of 1907, working on *The Dynasts* in the British Museum; the odd thing is that Florence,

[1] *The Second Mrs Hardy*. By ROBERT GITTINGS and JO MANTON. Heinemann, £5.50.

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who was still technically a teacher, went to London and was granted a British Museum reader's ticket in December 1906. "The name of her sponsor is not at present available to researchers", the authors report, which is disappointing; if it was Hardy, their meeting would most likely have been pre-arranged, with Florence cast as a research assistant. For this is what she became, helping with Part III of *The Dynasts*: "by the summer of 1907, the great writer and the young teacher were meeting regularly."

The sour comedy of the next five years until Emma Hardy's death in November 1912 is more fully related in *The Older Hardy*: the clandestine visits to Edward Clodd's house in Aldeburgh, the pushing of her work to amused editors, and her attempts to make a living from journalism ("the most degrading work anybody could take up"). Of the extraordinary meeting of Florence and Emma at the Lyceum Club (ending with Emma inviting her to Max Gate, quite unaware of her separate relation with Hardy) the authors do not repeat Gittings's speculation that it was engineered by Hardy himself. Her week's stay provided plenty of gossip to Clodd ("re Hardy et uxor"), with whom she seems to have been independently friendly, but thenceforward she was often there, as if "both the Hardys were in love with this girl, so much younger than their withered embittered selves." She encouraged Emma to finish *Some Recollections*, the narrative that provided much material for Hardy's love poems after her death.

THE QUESTION, why did Florence marry Hardy, is repeated here with greater emphasis than in *The Older Hardy*. When Emma died, Hardy telegraphed for her, and after a short decisive battle with Emma's niece Lilian she took charge of Max Gate in January 1913. The following twelve months, so far from showing the inevitability of a union, make it nearly inexplicable. Hardy, engulfed in a floodtide of regret and remembrance, had no time for anyone but Emma; he talked of her, wrote of her, went in March to revisit the scenes of their first meeting, leaving Florence alone in the remote ugly house. It was a complete reversal of roles: now Emma was the cherished one, and Florence left disregarded at home. And she could see what life with Hardy was going to be like: "All I hope is that I may not, for the rest of his life, have to sit and listen humbly to an account of her virtues and graces." Her situation was delicate. Hardy would not be seen with her in Dorchester, and the servants said she was his mistress (Emma's personal maid, who stayed on for a month after her death, said many years later that two hairpins were found in Hardy's bed). He showed her a grave he had reserved for her in Stinsford churchyard, which she interpreted as a proposal of marriage and seems to have accepted. When Lilian reappeared for Christmas, Florence presented her ultimatum. They were married at Enfield on 10 February 1914. Florence raised the question of a marriage settlement, "but it seemed to annoy my husband, so I desisted."

It would not be difficult to see Florence as a person whose only talent was to insinuate herself into peoples' lives and make herself indispensable. Already there had been the affair of Sir Thornley Stoker, a celebrated Dublin surgeon and brother of Bram Stoker, who needed someone to help with his mentally-afflicted wife. In 1906–7 Florence acted as secretary to Lady Stoker's nurse, reading aloud, answering letters and exercising the dogs, and she was often there until Lady Stoker's death in 1912. When Sir Thornley himself died in 1912, he left her £2,000, thereby much infuriating his relatives who called her "that woman who got the Stoker money", although the nurse received £5,000. As Florence herself said, she was never so happy as when she had someone to take care of. It was much the same at the Hennikers' in 1911, where she typed Mrs Henniker's stories and took out the bulldogs. Her experiences of wage-earning (that newly-won women's privilege) had not been happy: what she really liked was to work for "nice" people in their own houses. Given this, she repaid them with assiduous industry and flattering devotion.

The authors' explanation balances self-interest (security, social advancement, the still-potent romance of literature) with altruism: she was sorry for Hardy, he needed her, and for this she was willing to ignore the foretaste she had had of life in a solitary house with a stingy husband more than twice her age. As we already know, her fourteen years of marriage turned out sufficient punishment for any ambitions she may have nursed. The house had no gas or electricity, no proper drains, no bathroom, and an inadequate guestroom. Before the year was out, Hardy had published *Satires of Circumstance*, with its heart-rending sequence of Emma poems; the following year she had to have an operation, but Hardy did not pay for it. Her own writing (she did publish *A Book of Baby Pets* in 1915) was blotted out by the immense task Hardy laid upon her of sorting and transcribing material for his mock biography, a project the authors ascribe to his desire to conceal his entire relation with Florence before Emma's death. She began to experience Hardy's susceptibility to young women ("as if a light were suddenly breaking through", as one of the maids put it); after another operation (which Hardy tried to prevent) she made a fool of herself over one of them, a young married woman who played Tess with the Hardy Players in Dorchester. And there was the constant depression of life with Hardy: he seems to have simultaneously ignored her and kept her in constant attendance on him. As she wrote to St John Ervine (complaining

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to distant friends was her only relief), she had had only one clear week away from Max Gate in seven years, and that was to have an operation.

HER IMMEDIATE WIDOWHOOD was not much happier. Sir Sydney Cockerell, who had been a friend of Hardy since 1911, proved a managing co-executor, and with Barrie was responsible for the unwanted Abbey funeral (the local vicar suggested the gruesome dismembering). Cockerell, who was a more complex and sympathetic character than the authors suggest, was in later years dismissive about Florence:

> "Mrs Hardy was dull beyond description—an inferior woman with a suburban mind, but very ambitious to be well off. I helped her a great deal in her life. Hardy left a very large estate; she found herself suddenly with £50,000 and wanted to shine. She thought Sir James Barrie would marry her. Barrie *did* propose—in a moment of emotion; but, to her great chagrin, he backed out. I regarded her as second-rate, though she started by greatly improving Hardy's comfort."

The authors find against the Barrie anecdote, but confirm that in early 1929 (barely a year after Hardy's death) Florence was nursing Barrie in London, sending eggs and flowers, and arranging tête-à-tête dinners: there seems no doubt that she hoped to be his second wife. One can only pity her, for if Hardy had been a path that led nowhere emotionally, Barrie was a veritable Lob's wood, out of which she stumbled in great distress back to Max Gate several years later. The remainder of her life up to her early death in 1937 was spent, rather surprisingly, as a woman of affairs in Dorset: she was a magistrate, a patron of Dorset General Hospital, and played a large part in a slum clearance housing scheme in Dorchester, where (unlike Hardy) she was popular. It sounds as if, belatedly, she came to some extent into her own after the Hardy years, that had been, if not beyond description, certainly dull.

The authors withhold a final verdict, but their interim summary is just. Even though the attraction of literature as a way of life proved illusory, she remained loyal to Hardy, providing him with a decade and a half of peace in which to produce the bulk of his poetry. While at times she may have been gossipy and ingratiating, there is no evidence of her doing anything hurtful or unkind; she was undoubtedly more sinned against than sinning, if indeed she was either. In the somewhat sweeping judgment of her cook:

> "He didn't want a wife. He wanted an unpaid

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secretary. Of all the married couples I have known I am certain that Mrs Hardy was the most unhappy of any wife."

AND WHAT, finally, does all this add to our view of Hardy himself? Certainly this has undergone strange refraction of late. Looking in the index under "Hardy, Thomas: Character" we find (omitting the page references) "hypochondria, self-absorption, stinginess, luxuriating in misery, selfishness, inhospitality, susceptibility to young woman, mother-fixation." This hardly recalls the author of *Tess* and *Jude*, and one cannot help thinking that Hardy biography will eventually have to settle somewhere between the twin poles of adulation and execration. The strongest impression one gets from the present account is that Hardy could have written an equally good poem about a man who never noticed anything at all. He never noticed that Florence and Lilian were locked in bitter opposition; he saw nothing odd about publishing a sequence of love poems to his first wife within twelve months of marrying his second; he forgot Florence's birthday, as Florence said he had forgotten Emma's. "In the sex-war, thoughtlessness is the weapon of the male, vindictiveness of the female", as Cyril Connolly wrote, but this was not war; it was more as if the freshness and delicacy of feeling that Hardy retained into his eighties required a formidable carapace of indifference and self-absorption to protect and preserve it. It was more a kind of innocence, though of an unappealing kind. The reader is left wondering, with Somerset Maugham, whether there is a point beyond which innocence becomes culpable:

> " . . . I think that when he had exhausted an emotion he took no further interest in the person who had aroused it. I should say that he had a peculiar combination of strong feeling and extreme callousness."
>
> "I don't know how you can say that", cried Roy. "He was the kindest man I ever met."
>
> Mrs Driffield looked at me steadily and then dropped her eyes.

Passion & Morality

D. H. Lawrence—By LAURENCE LERNER

D. H. LAWRENCE IS STILL a growth industry. Here are six new books—introductory, biographical, critical, scholarly-critical-historical-laudatory—to remind us that thousands of students and housewives are reading Lawrence in paperback and listening to the tutors and lecturers who tell them about Jessie Chambers and Ottoline Morrell, about rivers of dissolution and blood consciousness, about moral seriousness and industrial civilisation, about holograph ms E68.5 (Texas University). Next year there will be six more: it's all part of the price of overpopulation, and those of us who have contributed to the flood are in no position to complain about drowning. So let us rejoice that Lawrence is still being read (there can be no two opinions about *that*, surely); and, taking a deep breath, see what each of these has to tell us about him.

The Critical Heritage series presents the reception given to a writer by his contemporaries, mainly in the form of reviews, along with occasional remarks in letters. R. P. Draper's volume on Lawrence[1] has just been reissued "with corrections" (though he has not corrected the dates of those critics who have died since the first edition in 1970, so that one gets the impression that reviewing Lawrence is a recipe for longevity). Since a writer's reception is itself part of the history of literature, a collection like this must enrich our understanding of Lawrence and his place in modern literature. Even the abuse that greeted *The Rainbow* and *Lady Chatterley's Lover* ("These people are not human beings. They are creatures who are immeasurably lower than the lowest animal in the Zoo") is worth preserving, for in its context we can see that behind even the crudest vituperation may lie a considered moral position. Galsworthy's dislike of *The Rainbow* is not so violently expressed as that of the *Star* and the *Sphere*, and it was never published, but it is as profound: "There is no form of viciousness, of suggestiveness, that is not reflected in these pages." The reason for this intense dislike becomes clear as we read on: "the sexual instinct is so strong in all of us that any emphasis upon it drags the whole being of the reader away from seeing life steadily, truly and whole." This view is totally incompatible with the Lawrentian doctrine of love, but it has a long history: those for whom the sexual drive, "past reason hunted",

[1] *D. H. Lawrence: The Critical Heritage*. Edited by R. P. DRAPER. Routledge, £12.50.

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brings only expense of spirit in a waste of shame will always be hostile to Lawrence, and they include not only Galsworthy but also T. S. Eliot. I must come clean, and say that I am of Lawrence's party in this matter: I wince at how much Eliot has betrayed when he writes that Lawrence's characters make love in a way that loses "all the amenities, refinements and graces which many centuries have built up in order to make lovemaking tolerable." Yet reading through Eliot's two considered statements about Lawrence, I cannot feel they deserve the moralistic fury they have sometimes received. They are the by-products of the social doctrine of Eliot's prose and the deep, carefully controlled rejections of his verse at its most moving.

Lawrence's interaction with authors whom we are interested in for their own sakes forms one of the most fascinating aspects of the critical heritage. Middleton Murry enacted a sort of spiritual autobiography through his successive reviews of Lawrence (surprisingly, it was *Women in Love* that he found unacceptable, and *Aaron's Rod* that brought him round—no doubt there were personal factors in play here). Edwin Muir wrote two thoughtful accounts of why he believed "Mr Lawrence's genius still burns on wastefully" that point to why his animal poems are finer (less overwhelming, but finer) than Lawrence's. And Yeats' brief remarks on *Lady Chatterley*, in letters to Olivia Shakespeare, are as poignant as anything in the novel.

SOME OF THE MOST perceptive essays are by more or less forgotten critics: one Charles Marriott, for instance, writes of *The Ladybird*: "One had gathered that Mr Lawrence was overobsessed with the physical side of love. In these three stories, at any rate, it is not true. If he has an obsession it is with the spiritual aspirations which disturb the physical side." And occasionally the shrewdest observations come from hostile reviews (perhaps this is to be expected in the case of such a great uneven writer), as when Edward Shanks unkindly points out the resemblance between the style of *Aaron's Rod* and that of Daisy Ashford. But in the end it is not for individual items that the collection is so interesting, but for the way it shows the emergence, right from the beginning, of some of the central issues of Lawrence criticism, such as the tension between the artist and the thinker, or his views on male dominance.

There are two extreme positions on the relation between Lawrence's art and his ideas. On the one hand there is Richard Aldington asserting that Lawrence's "philosophical and psychological notions" are a matter of indifference to him; all that matters is that "Mr Lawrence is a great artist in words." On the other are all those attempts, encouraged by elements in Lawrence himself, to see him as a saviour because of his doctrines. It seems to me self-evident that both these views are incomplete, that out of the dialectical relationship between the thought and the artistry comes Lawrence's greatness: *Women in Love* draws its power from the kind of exploration found in "The Crown", yet who would read the turgid prose of that interminable essay if it were not for *Women in Love*? An early attempt to devise a vocabulary for this dialectical relationship was that of Edward Garnett: "he is the poet—psychologist of instincts, emotions and moods that it is needless to try and moralise." Garnett goes on to contrast passion and morality, and discuss the tension between them, in a way that points towards all the most valuable later discussions of Lawrence.

It has become a commonplace, with the rise of feminist criticism, to see Lawrence as a male chauvinist, objecting to women's fulfilment even in the sexual act (Kate in *The Plumed Serpent* has to learn to reject "the fire of irritation and the spasms of frictional voluptuousness"). This volume makes it clear that we do not need to wait for Kate Millet to find the point made. "Mr Lawrence is still sure", wrote *The Spectator* in 1923, "of the necessity for women's submission to man's domination if their love life is to bring satisfaction to either." And Alyse Gregory's anger with *Kangaroo* led her to paraphrase Lawrence's creed as "And so, men, drive your wives, beat them out of their self-consciousness and their soft smarminess and good, lovely ideas of themselves."

AND IS THE charge justified? I don't see how anyone can deny the male chauvinism of *Aaron's Rod* and *The Plumed Serpent*; but indignation should not lead us to forget how wonderfully Lawrence writes from the woman's viewpoint in his early work Take for instance "*Odour of* Chrysanthemums", the story of a miner's wife, her bitterness at how she is treated by her drunken husband, and her shocked reassessment of herself and their relationship when he is brought home dead after an accident. Elizabeth Bates is exploited by male egoism: she watches her husband's dinner ruining while he lingers at the pub, she has to defend herself against the self-indulgent emotionalism of her mother-in-law, who uses her love for her son against the younger woman: "But he wasn't your son, Lizzie, an' it makes a difference. Whatever he was, I remember him when he was little, an' I learned to understand him and to make allowances." No wonder she is bitter: and Lawrence sees the bitterness, and the insensitivity it leads her to when talking to her children.

> "I do think it's beautiful to look in the fire", said the child.

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"Do you?" said her mother. "Why?"
"It's so red, and full of little caves—and it feels so nice, and you can fair smell it."
"It'll want mending directly", replied her mother, "and then if your father comes he'll carry on and say there never is a fire when a man comes home sweating from the pit. A public-house is always warm enough."

The kitchen of her neighbour, the kindly Mrs Rigley, is slovenly but warm: warmth does not go with the resistance to being exploited. It is possible to read "*Odour of Chrysanthemums*" as an indictment of the hard defensiveness of the self-pitying wife—or as a passionate exposure of exploitation. Its merit lies in this ambivalence, in the simple clarity with which it shows us the situation: a simplicity appropriate to a short story. Elizabeth's self-discovery at the end is carefully written so as not to resolve or eliminate this ambivalence. She realises that she and her husband had completely ceased to know each other, but this awareness of essential isolation is not used for easy moral judgment: she is not made to say I was wrong, or to reassert that she was right.

ODOUR OF CHRYSANTHEMUMS IS ONE of the stories dealt with in Keith Cushman's book.[2] He describes the four stages of its text, and compares them with other versions of the miner and wife theme that Lawrence was working on at the time. The parallels he draws with Lawrence's biography are often mechanical to the point of silliness, but his central point is of great interest: that between the magazine version of the story and its revision for the *Prussian Officer* volume, "Lawrence's sympathy has begun to swing decisively to his father, which marks one of the great turning points in his artistic growth." There is no doubt about this change, and it led to Lawrence's famous remark "I would write a different *Sons and Lovers* now: my mother was wrong, and I thought she was absolutely right."

If this change is crucial in Lawrence's artistic development, it is not so in the simple way many critics have assumed. Lawrence's hostility to his father was of great artistic advantage to him in writing *Sons and Lovers*. It enabled him to see Morel with ruthless clarity, showing us his vitality and sensuousness while playing it against an awareness of his bullying and his wife's suffering. It prevented him from reducing Morel to one of those potent, sullen, mindless men who drew so much murky prose from him in later works. It is a mistake to think that what is crucial, in Lawrence's

[2] *D. H. Lawrence at Work: The Emergence of the Prussian Officer Stories*. By KEITH CUSHMAN. Harvester Press, £10.50.

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many fictional versions of the conflict between his mother and father, is the question of which side he is on. What is crucial is how well he has controlled his feelings for one or the other, whether he has managed to resist the drive to give us a crudely one-sided version. Since the portrait of Mrs Morel, though deeply sympathetic, is also so marvellously objective, and since Lawrentian doctrine, at any rate in the years between *The Lost Girl* and *The Plumed Serpent*, so easily accepts the values of the bullying male, we have to say that this "great turning point" in his growth was artistically dangerous.

What is the value, in the end, of the Lawrence-at-work studies which now threaten to become so plentiful (Keith Sagar has produced a calendar of his works[3] that provides a factual basis for a dozen more books like Mr Cushman's)? To learn how a masterpiece came into being can teach us a lot about artistic creation, but can it ever change the way we read the final product? The danger is almost unavoidable that the critic, in his delight at finding what seem to be important changes, will assume that they point to what is central in the meaning of the story. There is a further danger, too, that the writer's career will be seen not as a series of actual works, but as a process. Of course this has its benefits, including the fact that this is often how the writer himself saw things, but that should not be allowed to conceal the extent to which a masterpiece breaks free of the authorial concerns that produced it. And in the case of Lawrence, for whom the idea of process was so important and that of fixity so repugnant, it does lead to another crucial ambiguity. A character in a novel is part of a process, that of fictional narrative; the novel itself is part of a process, that of the author's development; and these two processes are not the same, and should not be confused. "At the very least", says Cushman in his conclusion, "I hope that this study has demonstrated the necessity of mastering the intricate chronology of Lawrence's writings before passing judgment on his developing art and ideas." This conclusion is a sane and balanced statement of how Lawrence's art needs to protect itself against "the double-edged seductiveness of ideas", more balanced and perceptive than the individual chapters it sums up, but in this sentence he has dropped back into crucial ambiguity: mastering the intricate chronology is necessary for judging the development but not for judging the art and ideas.

A very similar confusion vitiates Alistair Niven's reply to the "women's liberation" view of Lawrence. He denies that Lawrence believed in "the fulfilment, even the redemption, of women only by the higher power of men", because this would be to impose a single theory "upon his constantly probing method": "it was Lawrence's main belief that to rest inertly in a settled viewpoint is intellectual death." The difficulty here is to know whether Niven is saying that Lawrence does not stick to the same views as the years pass, or that within *The Rainbow* and *Women in Love* (which he is here discussing) there is no single theory, no settled viewpoint, but a process of exploration with suspended judgment. If it is the former, I feel he should admit that Lawrence changed his mind, and that it is not in itself a merit in any book that it should differ from its predecessor (or an earlier version of itself). If the latter, then I believe this is wholly true of *Sons and Lovers*, largely true of *Women in Love*, which is more exploratory but in a sense less open-ended, and quite untrue of *The Plumed Serpent*. (Since this is the only comment on Mr Niven's book,[4] I must in fairness say that it is a useful and intelligent guide to the novels: whether we now need any more guides is however open to question.)

WRITER-AT-WORK STUDIES offer one kind of interaction for literary criticism: biography is another. Paul Delany's[5] book tells the story of Lawrence and his friends during the war years: it is a fascinating story and he has researched it meticulously. I am inclined to judge biographers on how far they let the subjects speak for themselves, and there are plenty of helpful extracts from Lady Ottoline, Bertrand Russell, Middleton Murry *et al.*, as well as from Lawrence himself. One marvellous description of Lawrence beating Frieda, by Katherine Mansfield, is worthy of the comic Lawrence of *The Lost Girl*, and in itself almost justifies the whole book. (Frieda, incidentally, emerges as the most insufferable character in the story: all their friends seem to have longed to get Lawrence away from her.)

The title of Mr Delany's book derives from Chapter 12 of *Kangaroo*, in which Somers, the hero, goes over in memory his fearful experience of war-time England, "a true and deadly fear of the criminal *living* spirit which arose in all the stay-at-home bullies who governed the country during those years." The chapter makes a self-contained whole, and reading it after the biography was a fascinating experience. It is extremely close to the facts; and its impassioned asides on war-time England when "men lost their heads, and worse, lost their inward individual integrity" clearly express Lawrence's own views, at times in a manner which goes beyond relevance to the novel. I cannot blame Mr Delany for quoting it as evidence

[3] *D. H. Lawrence: A Calendar of his Works.* By KEITH SAGAR. Manchester University Press, £9.50.

[4] *D. H. Lawrence: The Novels.* By ALISTAIR NIVEN. Cambridge University Press, £7.50.

[5] *D. H. Lawrence's Nightmare: The Writer and his Circle during the Years of the Great War.* By PAUL DELANY. Harvester Press, £8.50.

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for Lawrence's own feelings during the war, since that is what it patently is. Yet since Lawrence himself has told the story, we can ask what the purpose is of retelling it.

"I have no wish", says Mr Delany in his Foreword, "to argue yet again the vexed issues of the relevance of literary biography—the predominant mode of this book—to critical interpretation." I do not know if he wants to impose the same denial on his reviewers: for the issue, though it may be vexed, is also inescapable. What is a book like this doing to the fiction? Does it treat Lawrence's novels as biographical documents? The only way to avoid doing this would be to ignore them, and to write about Lawrence as if he had never written fiction. Such an absurd procedure would at least avoid the pitfalls that even the most scrupulous literary biographer must fall into. Mr Delany is often scrupulous in his handling of the novels—more so than Mr Cushman—but in careless moments he writes as if a judgment on a fictional character is a judgment on its original (see, for example, the remarks on Michaelis, p.171). And nothing can alter the fact that his central purpose is, inevitably, to unwrite the novels—to strip away the transformations of art in order to re-emerge with the biographical raw material. The less transformation there's been, the better the fiction will serve the biographer; so to come across a *roman à clef* like John Cournos' *Miranda Masters* (of which I assume Mr Delany's account is just: he has aroused in me no wish to read it and check) is more useful than anything of Lawrence's.

And what of the reader whose central concern remains the fiction? Will he read it differently after he has been taken through the biography? "It" in this case means Chapter 12 of *Kangaroo*. The intensity of identification between author and character as that chapter opens is very striking. Writing of the war-time pressure to identify oneself with the criminal mob "and bay like some horrible unclean hound, bay with a loud sound, from slavering unclean jaws", Lawrence declares:

> This Richard Lovat Somers had steadily refused to do. The deepest part of a man is his sense of essential truth, essential honour, essential justice. This deepest self makes him abide by his own feelings, come what may. . . .
>
> How much humiliation had Richard suffered, trying to earn his living! How had they tried, with their beastly industrial self-righteousness, to humiliate him as a separate, single man? They wanted to bring him to heel even more than the German militarist did. And if a man is to be brought to any heel, better a spurred heel than the heel of a Jewish financier. So Richard decided later, when the years let him think things over, and see where he was.

For most of the novel, the hero is called simply

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"Somers." Now suddenly he is given his full name as he is presented standing heroically at bay against the criminal mob. The whole passage is drenched in rhetoric, as the lurid adjectives ("slavering, unclean") are set against the fine upstanding phrasing of "the deepest part of a man" or the ringing repetition of "essential." One can even glimpse Lawrence's uneasy consciousness of this. After being carried away into the exclamatory ("how much humiliation!") and into the insertion of his own anti-Semitic views, he realises that he has ceased to render Somers' direct experience, and adds the final awkward sentence.

NOW COULD WE HAVE known all this without first reading Mr Delany? I do not find that easy to answer. Perhaps if one read attentively enough, yes: the biography alerts us to explanations of what the critic may well respond to as he reads. It is after all obvious that "The Nightmare" is a far longer flashback than the novel needs. And no extraneous information, of course, can settle the critical question of whether this eruption of personal material has damaged or improved the novel. The stridency of that paragraph gives place, later, to some very powerful accounts of Somers' ambivalent feelings; or to scenes like this:

> The postman was over military age, and had a chuckle of pleasure in handing out those accursed On His Majesty's Service envelopes which meant that a man was summoned for torture. The postman was a great Wesleyan and a chapel preacher, and the thought of hell for other men was sweet in him: he had a religious zest added to his natural Cornish zest in other people's disasters.

Is this tiny vignette (we see no more of the postman) an expression of resentment and malice at the bad time Lawrence had with the locals in Cornwall? Or is it a nugget of insight into the blending of religious zest, cruelty and relief at one's own safety? Or can it be both? Can resentment not lead to insight?

AND SO, FINALLY, to the one work of pure literary criticism among the six. Andor Gomme introduces the essays he has assembled on Lawrence[6] with the assertion, reiterated by almost every contributor and insisted on in the bibliography, that F. R. Leavis "has done more than anyone else to explore and lead us into the nature of his

[6] *D. H. Lawrence: A Critical Study of the Major Novels and Other Writings*. Edited by A. H. GOMME. Harvester Press, £10.50.

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greatness." To those who consider, as I do, Leavis's book on Lawrence a mixture of the strident and the trite, this augurs badly; and the first essay, on Lawrence and English prose, which apologises for neglecting "the question of how there can have been English novels *before* Lawrence's prose" makes one fear the worst. It is a pleasure to report, after this dreadful opening, that the book contains three or four good essays, and two very good ones. A neat and convincing discussion by Jacques Berthoud on how *The Rainbow* turns from a traditional to an experimental novel offers a very just account of the dangers as well as the strengths of the experimental or (the word is Lawrence's) the exhaustive method. Of the descriptions of what Skrebensky means to Ursula ("a load-stone", "a dark impure magnetism") Mr Berthoud writes, "I can feel the intensity of this writing but I do not really understand it: I cannot, even imaginatively, *recognise* this experience." Even better is the essay on *Sons and Lovers* by the editor, which applies the famous "never trust the artist, trust the tale" to Lawrence himself, and shows brilliantly why Jessie Chambers' biographical complaint of Lawrence's unfairness is artistically relevant, enabling us to see how Lawrence and Paul conspire to treat Miriam as an abstraction, in accordance with Mrs Morel's wish, while the novel establishes her concrete reality (and Mrs Morel's possessiveness) in a way that fights back at the distortion. All the best critics of *Sons and Lovers* (Vivas, Hough, Mack) have seen that it is in some way a book divided against itself, and by introducing the biographical material so scrupulously, Mr Gomme has added to their insights in a way that is far superior to the exclamatory fulsomeness of Leavis.

I am not sure that the students and housewives need read any of these books, though I would like to think their tutors will read Messrs Gomme and Berthoud, and look at Mr Delany's biography. The one possible exception is the Critical Heritage volume, which tells us so much about literary issues in the 20th century. And of course if any of these books sends readers back to *Sons and Lovers* or *The Rainbow*, or even *Kangaroo*, that will be pure gain.

The Prison-Cell of Political Theory

On John Dunn's "Captive Mind"—by KENNETH MINOGUE

JOHN DUNN'S new book is addressed to a promising question:

> "Do the traditions of understanding politics which have developed in Europe over the last two-and-a-half millennia possess any real residual capacity to direct us in the face of the world which now confronts us?"[1]

In case anyone should hesitate to embrace this question, Mr Dunn offers us an alarming alternative: perhaps these traditions "are simply crazed myths clashing meaninglessly in a night which they can neither understand nor illuminate." Even to contemplate Plato *et al.* as crazed myths sends a shiver of horror down the spine, so we had better settle for that somewhat blunt formulation about "residual capacities" directing us. Political theory is to be mobilised. Philosophers of the tradition, unite!—You have nothing to lose but your irrelevance—You have a future to confront.

The unfortunate fact, however, is that philosophers are a quirky lot who resent being drilled to a common end. Put them together on the parade ground and they go marching off in all directions, while the sergeant-major bellows helplessly. And hence it is no surprise that the project fails. After 117 pages of dense prose, we learn that for the inhabitants of both the capitalist West, and for everyone else, there may be a world to win; or, on the other hand, there may not, and we had better start thinking about it. If this is what the tradition of political thought has to tell us, then the game's up! We'd better take to the hills. Maybe learn carpentry.

Still, failure on this massive scale may perhaps be worth more than the piddling little successes of the ordinary academic book. It can tell us a lot. The interesting reasons for it are to be found in Mr Dunn's treatment of democracy, liberalism, and capitalism. But there are some more immediate reasons which must be cleared away first.

The main one is that Mr Dunn does not in fact perform as he promises. Instead he offers us a polemical essay which balances comment on the modern world, with a highly selective attention to (mostly) British political thinkers, who are discussed not for the interesting things they can tell us, but as part of the symptomatology of a capitalist society. Merely to state this formula is to reveal

[1] *Western Political Theory in the Face of the Future.* By JOHN DUNN. Cambridge University Press, £8.50.

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that Mr Dunn has trespassed into the territory which Professor C. B. Macpherson has made his own; and a young amateur trespasser cannot hope to be compared for mastery of the genre with such an old hand as Macpherson.[2]

Further, Mr Dunn fails to treat the actual thoughts and words of the illustrious dead with quite the unremitting respect which they are generally thought to deserve. When the reader stumbles, for example, into a remark about Plato's "over-readiness to ascribe substantive egoism to animality and substantive altruism to abstract thought", he may begin to wonder whether this is not perhaps some highly intellectual *haiku* which has been playfully embedded in the interstices of discursive prose. Alas no, since it seems to license Mr Dunn in concluding that "Plato's explicitly political doctrine is certainly fairly grotesque", which manages to be over-confident and unilluminating at the same time. That Mr Dunn should judge Hobbes to be a psychological egoist is at least a popular, and just possibly a defensible view; but it is unmistakably travesty when the philosopher who so very carefully insisted that Sovereigns had no business meddling with the actual thoughts of men should be lumbered with the opinion that: "Thinking for themselves and judging for themselves as individuals was a social practice which—in all but rulers—Hobbes vehemently deplored." Hobbes did not really vehemently deplore anything very much; he wasn't that kind of writer. But this is a good illustration of the way in which Sergeant-major Dunn attempts to impose parade-ground discipline upon his troop of quirky philosophers.

LATER WRITERS ARE systematically deformed because they are all taken to be theorists of something called "capitalism", an idea not invented until most were dead. They are all rather curiously presented as seeking something to trust in. Jeremy Bentham, for example, is said to have trusted in capitalism, which must have been difficult since, as we have just noted, he didn't know it existed. The oddest case is John Locke. To criticise Mr Dunn's opinions on Locke is a perilous course for a reviewer since Mr Dunn has written a whole book on that philosopher. Still, it does seem distinctly odd to read here that Locke "put his trust in" God and his own intelligence; when it came to the crunch, however, Locke is said to have preferred God. The oddity of the whole passage is not relieved by Mr Dunn's additional comment: "This is self-evidently not a matter for *intellectual* congratulation." (The emphasis is in the original.)

STILL, THE BOOK is primarily not about the tradition of Western political theory but about the present realities of Democracy and Liberalism, and the possibility that Revolution might produce a better world. This last is a possibility about which Mr Dunn is understandably sceptical. Now liberalism, capitalism, and democracy are ideas of such easy accessibility even to those with the most negligible acquaintance with the tradition of political thought that the explicit question with which the book began shrinks to an interesting conceit sitting astride an entirely familiar type of discussion of the modern world. And it is as such that it must be treated.

The diagnosis is neither foolish nor unfamiliar. Democracy, we learn, is pretty much a sham; it is the name for what we cannot have but never cease to want. Government by the people is impossible, and besides, the actual workings of what we call democratic institutions "favour the wealthy and well-organised against the poor and disorganised for all it and they are worth. . . ." And discussing liberal pluralist views about democracy—a class of view for which Mr Dunn has an unremitting distaste—he remarks:

> "Even in its own dreary terms the democratic government offered in this theory seems a somewhat ineffective mechanism for protecting the interests[3] of quite a number of the governed."

It is certainly true, and perhaps a problem, that liberal democracy (or "capitalist democracy" as it is often called here) will tend to perpetuate a world of more and less powerful people, a world in which some prosper more than others. In this respect, it is, of course, no worse than any other form of government known to men. We in the contemporary West regard this consequence as a problem to be solved; and much of our politics, from progressive taxation to comprehensive schools, revolves around devices addressed to solving it. Mr Dunn thinks it a very important problem and this is certainly a defensible point of view. What he does not do is supplement this moral judgment by considering the political realities which turn it into one of the more acute dilemmas of our time.

The political fact is that the poor and the unsuccessful constitute today, as they have from Greek times onwards, the favourite constituency of

[2] See: C. B. Macpherson, *The Life and Times of Liberal Democracy* (1977). I have discussed Macpherson's work in "Humanist Democracy: The Political Thought of C. B. Macpherson", *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, September 1976; and "Abstractions and Political Theory", *Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory*, Spring-Summer 1979.

[3] Mr Dunn presumably means "rights" rather than "interests" here, since if it is true that there are any conflicts of interests within a society, then it becomes logically impossible for *any* government to protect the interests of *all* its citizens. (Even more substantial reasons for thinking this is an odd way to speak would emerge from an adequate understanding of the concept of "interest.")

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demagogues and power-hungry adventurers. It is obviously not true, of course, that any politician who concerns himself with the fate of the poor and unsuccessful is an ambitious scoundrel. It is true, however, that some of the worst and most vicious régimes of our time are founded upon the moral claim that they are redressing the special type of evil called an inequality. There is, then, a complex and fascinating problem arising from the fact that in moral terms the poor may claim our help and sympathy, but in political terms, they can constitute something of a menace to free institutions. This ambivalence is, of course, part of the secret of Marxism, which is morally all head-in-the-air, and politically all boot-in-the-groin.

ON THE QUESTION OF DEMOCRACY the wisdom of the tradition leads merely to a few melancholy remarks to the effect that we are sentenced politically to "a condition of ineradicable bad faith." The bad faith is that we want and dream of what we cannot have, and hence *every* modern state is indicted as a betrayal of human fulfilment. The only relief from this melancholy conclusion comes from a very odd quarter indeed. We learn that our selfish acceptance of our high standard of living is morally inferior to the spirit of Terrorists who are at least trying to change an intolerable world:

> The relaxed economic nationalism of operating states, although it is a natural outcome of the dynamics of the world economy, poses a real threat to the future of the species, while the terrorist politics of national liberation, unprepossessing though it certainly is in itself, is premised upon very deep truths about the human political condition which it is wildly imprudent for us to ignore.

The fascinated reader, wondering what these deep truths could possibly be, will wonder in vain.

Any serious discussion of democracy in terms of the tradition of Western political theory must come up against one overwhelming fact, which might even, truly understood, mitigate Mr Dunn's melancholy: modern democracy is a Greek name for a medieval practice, and the disjunction between the name and the practice has had nothing but mischievous results. Modern democracy among us does not mean some prodigious accord between a Government and the People it rules—so prodigious, usually, that the whole idea of government tends to disappear altogether. It means, rather, such more practical things as the rule of law and a representative parliament which is regularly refreshed in rituals called elections. The Greeks had no theory of representation, nor would they have made much sense of the idea of "government by consent." Unless one grasps this fundamental point

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very thoroughly, one is likely to come up with the idiotic view that the House of Commons is merely a rather poor substitute for legislation by the whole of the British electorate assembled together in Trafalgar Square. The notion that the problems of a modern government should be decided by some kind of perpetual plebiscite is not merely demented; it is, in a mangled form, one of the favourite devices of some of the more odious despotisms of the last century. None of these considerations surfaces in Mr Dunn's discussion of democracy, and one reason for this is that his treatment of the tradition of Western political theory consigns the Roman and the Medieval parts of it—a good deal more than half the tradition in terms of time—to oblivion.

Melancholy about democracy, Mr Dunn is positively dismissive about liberalism. Liberal pluralists are scattered in a long footnote that must constitute one of the bloodiest human encounters since Little Big Horn. It may indeed be part of what one reviewer meant in commending the book as "a great skewering of the self-deceived." Karl Popper and F. A. Hayek are thin, do not offer "a very robust conception of the character" of free men, and are politically peripheral; John Rawls has "not stood up convincingly to criticism", and the unfortunate Robert Nozick is not only "ideologically bathetic" (whatever that is) but "culturally parochial" as well. Since the actual amount of argument leading to these conclusions is zero, it is difficult to see quite what Mr Dunn is driving at. He certainly thinks that liberalism has a shrinking influence on the world, seems to believe that this is a well-deserved diminution of power, and warns liberals that History has not guaranteed them forever.

In seeking to grasp what the argument amounts to, one might do worse than alight upon Mr Dunn's description of F. A. Hayek and Milton Friedman as "*laissez-faire* economists." They are certainly liberal economists, but "*laisez-faire*" (especially in that form) may well set us on the wrong track. Liberalism is a moral and political doctrine, but *laissez-faire* in the history of thought is a misleading expression because it conveys (as liberalism certainly does not) nothing else but the absence of regulation. Indeed, this actual French expression began as a description of the appropriate behaviour of governments in one department of an absolute state managed with an eye to national glory. In this sense, liberalism and *laissez-faire*, far from being equivalent expressions, are virtual opposites—a point lost in current usage as a result, presumably, of the modish preference for foreign or technical words to describe familiar things.

THE ATTRACTION FOR Mr Dunn, however, of this sense of liberalism is presumably the suggestion

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that in an unregulated state (or even in a state regulated in a liberal democratic manner) the poor get thrown to the wolves who have the money and the power. Such does not really seem to have been the case in the last century or so; but Mr Dunn keeps on course at this point by turning his attention to the writings of James Mill, Bentham, and their circle. The appearance in modern Europe of some thinkers who affirm a belief in psychological egoism is taken by Mr Dunn (as it was taken by the early Marx) to prove that the nature of man under capitalism is essentially egoistic. Mr Dunn does not seem to notice that this argument involves a fallacious slide from one sense of egoism (as actions that are fundamentally self-referring) to another and more popular sense of the word (as describing actions which exclude altruism or benevolence). Now if Mr Dunn wishes to affirm that the behaviour of modern Europeans has been more greedy and immoral than that of men in other times and epochs, then he is certainly entitled to make the attempt; and the rest of us will watch this quixotic enterprise with a certain sardonic amusement. But what he is not entitled to do is to sneak illicitly to that conclusion on the basis of a total misconception of the significance and representativeness of a handful of English publicists.

IT IS PRESUMABLY the centrality of the idea of egoism (or rather several conveniently interchangeable ideas of egoism) in his thought which is at the root of Mr Dunn's remarkably comprehensive misunderstanding of the nature of modern individualism:

> To be an individual*ist* is to embrace this fate [being individually distinct] with a suspicious alacrity, to make a vice out of necessity. Being individual—in aspiration at least—is simply doing one's own thing, a private concern or a consensual pleasure. Being an individual*ist* is well on the way towards disregarding the interests of others or denying the presence of any basic affective commitment of one human being towards another. . . .[italics in the text]

Mr Dunn clearly thinks Al Capone more of an individualist than Albert Schweitzer, and every capitalist down to the corner grocery proprietor closer to the former than the latter. For the fact is that what we have so far been dealing with is, in Mr Dunn's eyes, largely froth. The heart of the matter lies in Capitalism, and even liberalism is merely its reflection. Talking of one of his favourite black beasts, he remarks:

> Modern pluralism is . . . at least sufficiently sociologically self-aware not to blench from the insight that a liberal polity is the political form of

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bourgeois capitalist society. But the price which it has paid, so far pretty willingly, for this self-awareness, is the surrender of any plausible overall intellectual frame, uniting epistemology, psychology and political theory, which explains and celebrates the force of such political commitment. The transcendent, self-expressive, morally intense individualism of bourgeois society at its apogee is here thrust back all too firmly and anxiously into purely private life. Pluralism is the political theory of bourgeois society up against the wall.

Philosophers throughout the country will perk up no end at the thought of a new science to cultivate: *celebratory epistemology*. Mr Dunn is evidently very keen on epistemology, and there are times in reading the book when the reader will find it hard not to construe him as a kind of manic epistemological surveyor tapping away at our foundations and uttering cries like "hollow! rising egoism! creeping individualism!..." But the most remarkable fact about this and many other such passages is the sense it conveys that all thought is merely a gloss on practice. I have always taken pluralism to describe at least two beliefs. Firstly, that the politics of a modern state can best be described in terms of collections of groups attempting to influence legislation, rather than in terms of a single sovereign power juxtaposed against a homogeneous people; and secondly, an argument that the desirable thing called freedom is conditional upon a social condition of dispersed initiative. But here we find pluralism taken as a pretty poor sort of intellectual cosmetic covering an admittedly harridanish face. Pluralists are ironically congratulated on not blenching as they confess to the "insight" that liberalism is no better than the politics of bourgeois capitalism.

ONCE MORE the argument is dragged back to "Capitalism", from which all understandings seem to derive, to which they all return. Capitalism appears here as a cause of social behaviour, a mode of production, a restriction on our generous and inventive feelings, and as some sort of order.

> There never has been and there never could have been a conception of capitalist society which both acknowledged in their entirety its factual properties in any instance and presented it as a morally rational order.

What then *is* capitalism? To say that it is a mode of *production* has induced a great deal of muddle in Marxist thought, since whatever it may be it cannot quite be that. The way motor cars or grains of wheat are actually produced differs very little whether it be in Detroit or Magnetogorsk (not to mention the Soviet *Fiat* plant in Togliatti). On this point Mr Dunn's thought would benefit from the

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kind of tough and relentless analysis John Plamenatz gave to this idea in his book on *German Marxism and Russian Communism* (1954).

The best way of understanding capitalism is to see it the way Communist rulers see it: Capitalism is "what people do" when you get off their backs. . . . It is what the Russian peasant does when he is allowed a small plot for free cultivation unhampered by the bureaucratic inefficiencies of the *kolkhoz* which every so often bring the USSR to the verge of starvation. Capitalism is, as "capitalist-roader" Teng knows only too well, what the Chinese people do when they are allowed a moment of respite from the Red Guards. They write opinions on walls, sometimes even critical of the government. They perm their hair and go dancing, rather than chant slogans and fall in love with tractors. And indeed, if we take this perfectly correct Communist view seriously, then we might well agree that "liberalism", which allows people actually to vote out their leaders before senility or gang-infighting claims them, is evidently connected in some sort of way with "capitalism."

THE REALLY FUNDAMENTAL MISTAKE about capitalism is to be found in Mr Dunn's belief that it is not a "morally rational order", and this mistake must be corrected at two levels. The most obvious correction lies in observing that people, who, unlike Mr Dunn (living an unharassed life in liberal Cambridge), actually need to seek out a "morally rational order" because their lives and destinies depend on it, choose "capitalism" every time. The problem is not how to attract them but how to keep them out. As these lines are being written, the South China Sea is full of miserable refugees desperately trying to get into Hong Kong, and they are merely the latest instalment in a virtually non-stop 20th-century performance of the great "Build a Morally-Rational-Order Show." The one thing about a "morally rational order" is that it cannot be pluralistic; the project always involves getting rid of classes, races, or other disorderly categories. In terms of his consistent distaste for pluralism, one might infer that Mr Dunn approves of the expulsion of inconvenient people. I am sure he does not, and that he is no more sympathetic to filling the seas with unwanted Chinese than anyone else; he is certainly no simple-minded believer in the benefits of Revolution. But his theorising constantly trails these incomprehensible hints.

On this point Mr Dunn would have done much better to stick to the project he announced at the beginning of the book. For the tradition of Western political theory is by no means without "residual guidance" on this point. Consider, for example, Machiavelli's famous discussion of the rioting between patricians and plebeians in the early centuries of the Roman Republic. Machiavelli

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believed these conflicts maintained a balance of liberty in Rome, and he wrote:

> "From the time of the Tarquins to that of the Gracchi, that is to say, within the space of over three hundred years, the differences between these two parties caused but very few exiles, and cost still less blood; they cannot therefore be regarded as having been very injurious and fatal to a republic, which during the course of so many years saw on this account only eight or ten of its citizens sent into exile, and but a very small number put to death." (*Discourses*, I, iv.)

This is, if you like, one important criterion of the moral excellence of a régime: the death-and-exiles test. It is hard, precise, and realistic. Apply it to Britain and the liberal West, and it immediately destroys the high moral disdain in which Mr Dunn chooses to indulge. Nor is it an instrument of judgment likely to flatter those liberationists who espouse those "very deep truths" about the human political condition.

THERE IS, HOWEVER, a more fundamental mistake in disdaining "capitalism" as not being a "morally rational order." We may best understand it by observing that some (though not all) strands of socialism, communism, anarchism and other such doctrines rest upon a fundamental moral belief which can be stated as follows: Our moral judgments are directed at Man, but the real blame lies with the System, or the order of things. We criticise the criminality of the poor and the avarice of the rich, but both of these things are in the last analysis (which never forthcomes) caused by the fact that we do not live in a "morally rational order." In hard-headed versions of this doctrine, scientific socialists like Marx express contempt for utopian socialists like Robert Owen who thought that the solution to the problems of mankind could be achieved by a change of heart rather than a change of system. It will be observed that this doctrine takes it for granted that men are fundamentally good and require only to live in "a morally rational order" for this goodness to appear. It is not only the state that will wither away; moral problems will also largely disappear under an achieved collectivism.

The intellectual significance of this doctrine lies in the implication that we all live inside a system or an order of things, and that such orders and systems can be good or bad *in themselves*. Such a view is indeed very plausible (though misleading) if, for example, the order includes the institution of slavery; but aside from a few cases of this kind in which modern opinion happens to be almost unanimous, the idea of good or bad orders merely adds one more area of unsolvable dispute to the already disputatious activity of politics.

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NOW SINCE SOCIALISM was conceived from the very beginning as an order of things, and a good order of things, it was natural enough that this conception of human affairs should be projected backwards, and hence that "capitalism" should be interpreted also as an order of things, and a bad one. The crucial point to observe, however, is that capitalism is not an order of things in the same sense at all. Socialism (as it works, for example, in Communist countries) involves the direct governmental management of the economy, of whatever hierarchical social relations exist, of the beliefs of the population and of the information available to it, and much else. It is certainly, in intention at least, a moral and social as well as (what every state must be) a legal order of things.

Whether it is a "morally rational order" is another question. Even if it were, of course, we should merely be committing a new and splendid version of the naturalistic fallacy to believe that such a good order of things was all that mattered in morality. Even in the most splendid of orders, people would still have the opportunity to behave honestly, generously, truthfully etc. towards each other, or the reverse. Orders do not in fact determine morality; and one might well argue that they have very little to do with it.

"Under" (as we misleadingly say) "capitalism", on the other hand, a legal order certainly exists; but the way people act depends upon what they do with the freedom they have to order their own lives. And what they in fact choose to do is extremely varied. Those with a taste for living collectively end up in monasteries, communes or (in countries like Israel with an established taste and tradition for such things) *kibbutzim*. Nothing in the legal order prevents individuals from creating whatever collective enterprises they choose; equally, they have the option of individual enterprises. What people have actually chosen changes from generation to generation, and will no doubt continue to do so for as long as that freedom of available options has not been extinguished by one or other power-hungry hot-gospeller. It is no doubt this great variety of available options which explains why the capitalist West has such an "adverse" balance of payments in the matter of refugees. *Voting with their feet* (in Lenin's phrase), people want to flock in. No one much seems to want to go the other way, though it is important to note that they have the option to do so. For the most fundamental of rights—the right to emigrate—is only reliably practised under capitalism.

It has suited the political rhetoric of our time to take it for granted that "capitalism" and "socialism" are precise opposites; but it is a very important point of political theory to elucidate the significant differences of a logical type which prevent them from being so neatly equated. At one or two points Mr Dunn shows a glimmering

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awareness of the type of problem involved here; but he is still far too much impressed by grand and imposing abstractions in political thought to be able to criticise them effectively.

THE RESULT IS that Mr Dunn, far from exhibiting the vast riches of the tradition of Western political theory, has contrived to turn that tradition into a prison. There is room to doubt whether we shall ever understand much about our situation if we construe it as the clash of grand intellectualised systems like capitalism and socialism. But if we are to do so, then we had better use the creative resources of the tradition of political thought by minting these things anew (as such writers as Raymond Aron and Daniel Bell have done).

What we cannot any longer do is hobble along with a superannuated concept like "capitalism" which was invented for very special purposes a century-and-a-half ago, a concept which no longer corresponds to our realities, and whose main successes have been in the demagogic bewitchment of simple people in other continents. "Capitalism" was born a'dying in 1848. In 1937, Christopher Caudwell wrote a famous book called *Studies in a Dying Culture*. Decades later, Mr Dunn is still muttering about "mature", "late", indeed "senile", capitalism. But the senility attaches to the idea, not to the life going on around him, a life which he can neither see nor understand, so long as he chooses to remain imprisoned behind these bars.

Death is Good for You

Learning from Japan—By D. J. ENRIGHT

"UNTIL RECENTLY death has been mostly ignored as a conceptual issue in psychology." Tut-tut. So Messrs Lifton, Katō, and Reich have set out, *via* approaches both psychohistorical and sociohistorical, to study "death attitudes" in the lives of six individual Japanese, of whom two committed ritual suicide, two died of illness at the peak of their creativeness, and two died in old age, the six spanning the century between the Meiji restoration of 1868 and the present. "We believe this framework has at least the potential advantage of combining death-linked principles of individual motivation with necessary social and historical 'space'. . . ."[1]

In their preamble the authors unfold such basic themes as the sense of immortality deriving from the "inner quest for a continuous symbolic relationship between our finite individual lives and what has gone before and what will come after. . . ." (If I quote rather a lot it is lest paraphrase should result in misrepresentation.) One of those continuities or connectednesses, traditionally stronger in the East than in the West, is the family—which can give an enhanced sense of life but also, if you are obliged to die for the family honour, a shortening of life (there is nearly always a catch). The larger family is of course the nation: the catch here being that the line between love of country and hate-filled nationalism is a fine one. Sacrificing oneself for Emperor and Country may be a form of "dying into the cosmos" in which one has lived, but it tends to be fatal.

As we know, suicide has been a much grander institution in Japan than elsewhere: beautiful swords and daggers instead of squalid chemicals, gloomy canals, or mass-produced razors. The authors are quite firm: "One extreme way of giving form to one's death and one's life is through suicide", notably ritual suicide which, being ritual, is an assertion of "symbolic coherence", "a means of perpetuating important cultural principles, thereby contributing to survivors' sense of immortality through the biosocial and creative modes." Shakespeare said something like that: "*Nothing in his life / Became him like the leaving it. . . .*" It seems strange that, although three of their subjects were well-known writers, the authors have paid so little attention to what the poets have said about this allegedly ignored "conceptual issue."

GENERAL NOGI MARESUKE, "the popular hero of the Russo-Japanese War", was responsible for the death of tens of thousands of his soldiers in actions comparable to the Charge of the Light Brigade, and also (which seems to have distressed him more severely) for the losing in 1877 of the regimental colours presented by the Emperor. "His only hope for revitalization", say the authors, "lay in a good—a perfect—death." Consequently, on the

[1] *Six Lives Six Deaths*. By ROBERT JAY LIFTON, SHŪICHI KATŌ and MICHAEL R. REICH. Yale University Press, £12.20, $16.95.

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occasion of the funeral of Emperor Meiji in 1912, the patient General carried out *junshi*, the form of suicide by *seppuku* ("slitting the abdomen") in which a vassal follows his lord into death.

What is, in its dreadful way, interesting about this story is that in his will, written on the preceding evening, Nogi made provisions for his wife Shizuko's future—yet she was found dead with him. Not having the advantage of a military sword, she had stabbed herself with a short dagger several times above the heart, "probably dying in agony." We hear no more of Shizuko. In their preface the authors remark on the absence of women from their investigations as "a major limitation." They could find none "who met two of our basic requirements—writing about her own death, and a life sufficiently well recorded for us to reconstruct it." This is put down, fairly enough, to male dominance in Japanese society. However, feminists have something to look forward to, for "studies of women and death, in Japan and elsewhere, can and should be undertaken." This section, entitled "The Emperor's Samurai", closes with a grandiose declaration by Dr Lifton which, I suspect, would lose much in translation. "The overall process of manipulation of death-centred experiential transcendence reached its zenith in the kamikaze deaths during the Second World War."

MORI OGAI was a doctor/writer who sensibly preferred not to know too much about his own medical condition in order to get on with his literary work. "Neither fearing nor yearning for death. . . ." There would seem little specifically Japanese in that. His writing is of considerable interest both historically and intrinsically, though there appears to be no more than the usual weight of death-reference in it. Otherwise his chief interest for us lies in his four years of medical training in Germany, his learning German (and translating the first part of Goethe's *Faust*), and his falling in love with a German woman cryptically referred to as "Ellis." This is scarcely "representative", but the authors know that the unrepresentative is indirectly representative in the way that the exception proves the rule. Marriage to a foreigner would have damaged both Mori's family and his career as an army doctor, and in this case the rule prevailed. "Ellis" (another woman of whom we would like to hear more) was sufficiently uninformed as to follow Mori to Japan, but after three weeks of gentle though firm persuasion his family managed to get her on a French liner leaving Yokohama. "Everything thus went smoothly", Mori's sister later recorded, "without inflicting any damage to our precious eldest brother. . . ."

In a simpler sense Mori is "representative" through the co-existence in him and in his work of the drive to Westernise and modernise with the love of the traditional and indigenous—an eclecticism which has often struck the foreign observer as impossible though undeniably actual. "Accommodationist" is the term Messrs Lifton, Katō, and Reich use for this phenomenon. We are all accommodationists in some degree, and it is partly the foreign observer's obsession with samurai, harakiri, geisha, Emperor-worship, and so on, that has made it hard for him to see that Westernisation (a word which is rapidly losing its meaning) was not only, despite everything, possible for Japan but even desirable, even necessary.

Another catch: if you do not die, then you may acquire a kind of guilt about surviving. Kawakami Hajime, here summed up as "religious Marxist seeker, self-centred altruist, group-oriented individualist, poet-socialist fighter, and, despite all, man of integrity", is credited with a "productive survivor sensitivity." That is, Kawakami, dying in 1946, survived his comrade Yamamoto Senji, who was assassinated by a right-wing extremist in 1929, and transformed his guilt into political activism. An odder piece of psychologising occurs in the study of Masamune Hakuchō, who was brought up as a child by his grandmother.

> "Generally speaking, the replacement of his mother by this possessive paternal grandmother seems to have contributed to a basic anxiety

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about life and to an energising sensitivity to death and its equivalents."

Mishima Yukio was also reared by his grandmother, "a prisoner of her rooms during childhood and of her world for many years thereafter"; and the authors tell us that much of Mishima's "acute sensitivity to death can be traced to his aberrant and intense relationship with his long-dying grandmother." True, grandmothers tend to be older than their grandchildren, and thus to be the first deaths that those children experience. The situation is compounded by the Japanese grandmother's inclination to boss her son's wife and get her own back for the treatment she once suffered in the house of her mother-in-law: a by-product, one supposes, of male dominance.

To say that Masamune, hovering between Christianity and Buddhism (perhaps another sign of Japanese eclecticism), "lived with various contradictions, and, indeed, the contradictions were his life" is not to say very much. Yet no doubt the fact that he "lived and died on a border of integrated achievement and perpetual despair" will suffice to make him representative. It seems a pity that representativeness involves so much banality.

"The Man Who Loved Death. . . ." Of course, and alas, readers of this book are not spared another blow-by-blow account of Mishima's life and more particularly death, even though the manifesto of the Shield Society, his "private militia", with its talk of "Japan's very long post-war sleep", "Where has the spirit of the samurai gone?" and "Restore Japan to its true form and then die", says quite enough, one would think. However, the authors are not deterred from making their point yet again.

> "In a paradoxical way, Mishima's suicide was his ultimate proof of existence."

We are told in passing that Mishima's drive to kill himself before he was too old (too old to enact with modifications the photograph of himself as St Sebastian pierced by arrows?) was associated with "the Japanese version of the near-universal romanticisation of dying young." There also exists a Japanese romanticisation of living long and dying old, though admittedly I have not noticed in Japan (or elsewhere) any notable romanticisation of dying middle-aged.

Thus, although some unthinking persons might be tempted to suppose him off his head, Mishima is representative, and in his very excesses (incidentally there was one decency in his death: he took no innocent bystanders with him) we are urged to find connections with the ordinary. "Nothing Mishima experienced, however intense or bizarre", Dr Lifton informs us, "is alien to the human condition, to the struggles of living and dying": a statement which impresses me as both incontrovertible and meaningless. Perhaps through fear of limitation by their own culture, perhaps latterly through discontent with the drab disorders of democratic society, Western commentators often show themselves *plus japonais que le Japon*. There is something of this tendency, I believe, in the late Ivan Morris's considerably more readable book *The Nobility of Failure* (1975). It is refreshing therefore, not to mention reassuring, to hear from Mr Katō (who views Mishima's death as "the end of exhausted showmanship") that "Japan will make no powerful symbol out of Mishima's *seppuku*, the Japanese will instead, I believe, bury once and for all the sad memory of the wartime mentality."

THAT "we have much to learn from the experience of modern Japan" I have no doubt at all. For all the instructive anecdotes strewn through it, I do doubt that we learn very much from the present book's schematic procedures. While on the evidence of *Six Lives Six Deaths* it would be unsafe to dismiss psychohistory as bunk, it does seem that its speculations are only speculative whereas its findings have been found before. Its methods, laborious as they are here, seem akin to disembowelling a butterfly with a samurai sword.

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Views on "Animal Rights"

"Species-ism"?

by Jan Morris

WHEN I WAS SMALL my mother told me that one should never place another book on top of the Bible. I see now that her impulse was in some kind theological, inherited perhaps from her more unnerving Quaker forebears, but at the time I assumed it to be bibliographical concern—it would be discourteous, I gathered, to put a younger or lesser book, *Huckleberry Finn* say, or that other favourite of my childhood *Holiday Haunts*, upon a volume so venerable and distinguished as the Oxford india-paper edition of Holy Writ, with thumb-index and variations.

Anyway, from that abjuration I date my commitment to Inanimate Rights, and even now I sometimes apologise aloud, when I prefer one pudding-plate to another, and certainly would not express in its presence my true opinion of a particularly awful standard-lamp I was recently persuaded to buy for my library. This is, I know, crankiness carried almost to the point of lunacy: but at least it places me far ahead of the field, when it comes to the consideration of that ever more insistent moral, social, economic and even political issue, the rights of animals.

Brigid Brophy sees the frontier between humanity and the other animals as a class barrier, and she campaigns for the shifting of that barrier further down, if that is not an offensive preposition, the scale of creation—from its present position between us and the dumb animals, to a place between the dumb animals and the vegetables. She is probably being politic though: for if she is the visionary I assume her to be, she is already wondering about the rights of plants, their possible ability to feel, their apparent readiness to respond to conversational encouragement.

Certainly the recognition of animal rights seems to me an almost elementary act of justice. If you care about the emotions of a pudding-plate, you can hardly think otherwise. It is perfectly obvious to me that the whole of animal life, from the saints to the slugs, is equal in the sight of Nature, and that our duty towards our fellow-creatures is no less than it is to our fellow-humans—more perhaps, if we accept the notion of *noblesse oblige*. I find this ethical principle so self-evident that in theory I cannot see why any decent human being, with a modicum of compassion and imagination, fails to subscribe to it.

I say in theory, because in practice I have just this minute finished a very satisfying dish of bacon and eggs: and such awkward incongruities are what the book I have just been reading, *Animals' Rights—A Symposium*, is largely about.[1] It is a collection of the papers presented at a conference on the subject held at Cambridge in 1977 under the auspices of the RSPCA, and it brings together the ideas of philosophers, scientists, theologians, nutritionists and a few artists in an attempt to codify some general rules of conduct governing our attitude to the other animals.

THE SYMPOSIUM seems to have had its risible side. Campaigners in the animal cause are particularly sensitive to mockery, and to judge from some of these pages, they have reason to be. These speakers are not of course the gushing dog-lovers or pussy-nuts so dear to the English humorists, but in their very lack of sentimentality they can be nearly as comic.

They have developed, for instance, a cult jargon just made for parody, and these papers are full of its favoured words and phrases: *speciesism, eco-ethic, dietethic, conative, Animal Rightists, zoo-philes, anthropocentrism*. The "sentiency criterion" figures prominently in their arguments, and one especially adept practitioner draws our attention to a "speciestic ill-definable cut-off at the level of non-sentience." You can, it seems, be a "speciesist" these days, as you can be a sexist or a racist, and you may even be a "Creationist"—one who believes the word of Genesis.

Then again the attempts of the philosophers to identify the rights of animals are as pompously absurd as are most such academic exercises, from arguments about angels and points of needles to differences of opinion about the Structure of Experience. There are protracted discussions here about whether animals actually *possess* rights, as they possess horns and hoofs—not legal or social rights, but moral ones, as though there is hanging around somewhere some immutable and universal ethic, to be assembled only by philosophical extrapolation, which will be as binding upon us all as gravity, hunger, or the speed of light.

[1] *Animals' Rights: A Symposium*. Edited by DAVID PATERSON & RICHARD D. RYDER. Centaur Press, £6.50.

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Do we have a duty towards animals, these theorists solemnly speculate, if the animals, being dumb, cannot claim it? Does a creature which is non-sentient possess any moral value? Does an animal have rights if it can feel, or only if it can wish?

> "In the face of the ultimate reality of nature, [one contributor assures us] both gnostic and agnostic, atheist and pantheist, are one in the same reality of relatedness and experience."

You don't say! It is enough to make an Inanimist laugh.

BUT THE SYMPOSIUM was not all at that level. These papers are full of practical suggestion and sensible inquiry. Ms Brophy offers a summary of her own eminently reasonable attitudes. Mr Jon Wynne-Tyson convincingly demonstrates why we all ought to be vegetarians, if not on moral grounds, at least in ecological self-interest. There are sane and useful discussions of vivisection, and there is an excellent paper, by David W. Macdonald and L. Boitani, on the rights and wrongs of animal conservation—the intervention by man, that is, in the natural rise or fall of other species.

This was especially pertinent to prejudices of my own, for I have long since come to regard animal preservationists, who are so often zoo-keepers in disguise, or mere meddling scientists, with profound distrust. I believe myself that man's posture towards the wild animals should essentially be one of non-interference. Just as I hold all vivisection to be wicked, whatever its benefits for mankind, so I believe nearly all scientific inquiry into the ways of animals, the ringing of birds, the electronic tracking of tigers of foxes, to be an unacceptable degradation of our creature colleagues. It is none of our business.

But Messrs Macdonald and Boitani convinced me that there are times when interference has been justified—in the saving from extinction, for instance, of the wolves of the Abruzzi, (where the authorities, by the way, rather than allow wolves to be shot, simply paid compensation to the owners of the sheep they ate). Like several other essays in the book, this one made me look again at many puzzles, contradictions and blind spots in my own attitude towards the animals, and if it did not always give me answers, at least stimulated me to reconsider some old questions.

For example, are we justified in impeding evolution? For years I argued that man himself was just another organic factor in the ecological process—if his superior abilities caused the extinction of some less forceful species, that was simply part of the natural progression. Don't meddle! But I have come to realise that the power to reverse things, to divert the course of progress, is *itself* organic, and so obliges us, if not to tamper with the behaviour of other species, at least deliberately to modify our own in their behalf.

Then again, on quite another tack, what are we to do about the horse? No lovelier, stranger, more magical creature exists than the horse in the wild, but centuries of exploitation by man have turned it into a degraded slave, bound about with leather throngs, pricked with spurs and lashed with whips, condemned to eternal labour, humiliation or display. But does not reason tell us that, whatever the Animal Rightists achieve, we are stuck with this horrible spectacle? Can we imagine the Pony Club liberating its captives? And would the horses, bred as they have been so long into degradation, know what to do with liberty?

And then there is the bull-fight. Try as I may, I cannot eradicate from my mind the fascination, the beauty and the glory of a really first-class contest. Nothing is more loathsome than a bad one, when a maimed and mangled animal limps hideously to its slaughter tormented by an incompetent oaf in spangles: but still I seem to see, in the noble conclusion of a great fight, when the magnificent beast sinks undiminished to its death, saluted sadly by its brave opponent—whatever my reason says, emotionally I seem to see in that grand and terrible spectacle some suggestion of brotherhood between victor and vanquished, some promise of reconciliation between us all.

And what, above all, about those bacon and eggs? Vegetarianism, of course, stands near the heart of the animal cause, and most of the speakers at the Cambridge symposium were dedicated vegetarians, if not *vegans* (people, that is, who eat no dairy produce either). The taste for meat is the Achilles heel of many an animal protectionist, and some of the most fervent hunt saboteurs, I do not doubt, go home after the fray to a sustaining steak and kidney pie.

Fortunately for me, when it comes to carnivorism I am armoured in another convenient mysticism. As it happens I am very nearly a vegetarian, simply as a matter of taste, but I have come to feel in any case that there is nothing wrong in eating animals that are humanely reared and painlessly slaughtered. On the contrary. Just as those rugby-players stranded in the Andes, reluctantly eating their dead comrades, imagined some sense of sacrament to their action, so do I feel about the eating of animals. It is true that Christ spoke only of the breaking of bread (and the drinking, of course, of that blood of God, wine): but even as the Last Supper was, in my view, symbolic of our unity with all things of the earth and heavens, so I believe that the respectful and grateful symbiosis of the flesh of the beasts, in the course of the common cycle of all our lives, carries with it a divine and honourable meaning.

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"HONOURABLE" may ring hollow, to those who will think all this hypocritical mush and sophistry. But it seems to me that when we speak of animal rights, we can only mean what appears right to us. There is much discussion in this book about the degree and nature of animals' feelings. We can never know what they feel: all we can do is assume that their feelings are as sensitive as our own, and treat them with a proper dignity. This is not anthropomorphism (a dirty word, it seems, among animalists). It is common sense, rule of thumb, or just plain good manners.

Their attitudes, unregulated by any phoney philosophers' ethic, must inevitably be personal and subjective, but still the very fact of the Cambridge symposium shows that we have advanced since the days when "kindness" was all the animals seemed to deserve. My feelings about the eating of meat may not commend themselves to the *vegans* (though they do not clash, I discover, with the teachings of Buddha—Buddhists may not kill, may not cause to be killed, but they may eat what is killed anyway). At the same time the conduct of Dr Colin Blakemore, the 1976 Reith Lecturer whose research on the human brain entailed sewing up the eyes of kittens and cutting the muscles that control their eyeballs, distinctly does not commend itself to me.

But there is a mean, I think, to which most educated and humane people would now subscribe, and which Ralph Hodgson put into poetry long ago:

'Twould ring the bells of Heaven
The wildest peal for years,
If Parson lost his senses
And people came to theirs,
And he and they together
Knelt down with angry prayers
For tamed and shabby tigers
And dancing dogs and bears,
And wretched, blind pit ponies,
And little hunted hares. . . .

The killing of animals for fun or vanity, the imprisonment of wild beasts for show, needless vivisection, the horrors of factory farming—all these are evils which, I think, most civilised people would now think unacceptable, whatever the state of the law. Their elimination is perfectly attainable: only public education is needed to make them as generally repulsive to the people as bear-baiting or cock-fighting.

Animals' Rights bafflingly contains no reference to zoos, the most blatant examples of man's inhumanity to the beasts, but it does conclude with a workmanlike summary of possible legislation by Lord Houghton, and it gives hope that these moderate objectives really are within grasp. Some of it is footling, but much of it is admirable, and there is nothing like reading about vivisection or the lives of battery hens to clear one's mind of cant. (Though as I close my typewriter now, all the same, hastening to assure it that I don't *in the least* resent its inability to deliver a legible semi-colon, I cannot help feeling that the Animal Rightists still have a long, long, way to go. . . .)

The Latitudes of Home

Here I read Biggles; in this chair, *Ulysses;*
Here I watched sperm wriggle across a slide
Slower and slower as their element dried;
In this back corridor I gave secret kisses
To tins of sweet milk, other people's blisses;
Ironed on this table; underneath it tried
To find the pleasure grown-ups used to hide;
And here faced east for several thousand pisses.

Meanwhile my father earned the means of life
At this thin desk; my mother was his wife;
The cost of living rose each dreamy year
Till now: his surgeon, gratis, lifts a knife
And starts to cut him; and I think with fear
Till now I never wrote a poem here.

Alistair Elliott

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IN THE MARGIN

The Harich Case

East Goes West

By Melvin J. Lasky

Vienna

OUR recent portrait of Wolfgang Harich ("The Heresies of Wolfgang Harich" by William Traherne Jones, ENCOUNTER, August 1977) was very knowledgeable. But one thing our otherwise well-informed author could not know—that at the very moment his Machiavellian career in Stalinist orthodoxy was being summed up in London, Harich was planning his greatest Party-line coup of them all, namely a new career in the West!

As the press has already reported, Wolfgang Harich is now living and working in Vienna, and has requested Austrian citizenship (although he is still a citizen in good standing in the East German *DDR*, a neat, characteristically Brechtian twist). Has he defected? Not at all. Is he simply on a long vacation? Come on now, good comrades don't take holidays from the sacred cause of the revolution and the class struggle.

The real explanation, evidently, is that he wants to continue his struggle on behalf of those ideas which he expressed in his "Club of Rome" book, an impassioned radical pamphlet pleading for a Communism without Growth, a new "revolutionary Austerity" which would protect the Earth from the Robber Barons of unnatural capitalism. Naturally, the book was published only in the West. Not unnaturally, Harich could not get a hearing for his "monastic socialism" anywhere in the East. He never learned: in the house of the hungry don't speak of tightening belts.

He did, to be sure, *try* (as he confesses in a remarkable interview in Vienna, published in the Hamburg *Spiegel* of 11 June). For some three-and-a-half years he tried to organise an "interdisciplinary commission" at the East German Academy of Sciences which would concern itself with the dire ecological problems of the future. He was even promised by the SED's Central Committee that this would indeed be permitted, but only on two conditions. (No prizes for any ENCOUNTER reader to guess what they were; they are so obvious only a German Professor of Marxist-Leninist Philosophy could possibly be taken by surprise.) The limiting conditions were: (1) Harich's work should concern itself only with the problems of "environmental destruction" *in the West;* and (2) it should have *no reference to the East at all* (and all contacts with *DDR* scientists were forbidden).

This obviously broke poor Harich's heart (already weakened by a few coronary blows from within). In his ailing, somewhat depressed condition he pleaded for at least permission to do his work in the West, to put his mind and pen (two devilishly clever instruments) at the service of the Green Movement which was attacking bourgeois society at its technological centre. Lo and behold! permission was given. He offered to renounce his East German citizenship, to accept *Ausbürgerung*. But the East German Communist officials politely declined. As they, with fine feeling, explained to him, "No, it would only hurt us if people began to say again that one can't live, one can't breathe amongst us! . . ." He could remain a loyal and patriotic citizen even in Vienna, and he could come home any time he so wished.

SO IT IS THAT Wolfgang Harich has gone West, has come in from the cold, has become a quiet man in Vienna. In his incorrigibly sly way he also suggests (in *Der Spiegel*) that he has a "private motive", i.e. an Austrian girl friend. Be that as it may, it would take the linguistic sensitivity of an Orwell, the dialectical insight of a Koestler, the "pharmacological" experience of a Czeslaw ("Murti-Bing") Milosz to puzzle out the various new strands of the Harich story which was already darkly complicated enough when Traherne Jones was gathering his material in East Berlin for his ENCOUNTER profile.

If Harich is a shade disappointed in the way the grand East European Revolution has been taking its course, it is really, basically, only the West that is to blame. Affluent Capitalism is simply forcing Communist societies to raise the standard of living of its peoples. He looked, as he says, everywhere at home for support from austere "Robespierres"—but found only opposition from portly "Dantons." The old hard-liners never trusted him, not even after he served 8 years in prison for his moment of unorthodoxy in 1956 ("back to the true German Revolution of Rosa Luxemburg!") The liberalisers, not to mention the dissidents, showed only con-

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tempt for an ideologue who preaches the necessity of an even harsher Dictatorship in order to save the birds and the bees. ("Now," remarked one East Berlin poet, "we have to Struggle On and Sacrifice All . . . for the nightingales.")

WHAT A CRUEL dilemma! But, perhaps, there was some far-off socialist land where he could find a tiny bit of liberty to fight on for humanity? "Well, I could think of emigrating to Albania. . . ." But this was meant as a joke. What about China? But even there things are too far gone, the "classical course" of Mao has been abandoned, the Chinese are too keen on modernisation and are even working with the Americans.

So it is that the Green Front in the West, which has not been without its victories (especially in the onset of local agitation against nuclear-energy plants), has gained a new ally. Whether they will accept his undeniable intellectual energies is a moot question. For his part he will, as he has declared, try to find a "golden middle way" between their anarchic individualism, their sentimental regionalism, and "my one-sided centralist ideas, the good old decent Stalinist traditions *(meinen guten, alten, braven stalinistischen Traditionen)* in which I was brought up. . . ."

If he fails, can he go home again? Well, he almost never left. He had all his exit papers in his hand, he says, when the East German Communist press reported some new limitations on the special *Intershop* markets where anything can be bought by anybody so long as payment is made in hard foreign currency. For a moment Harich's hopes resurged: the first sign of the longed-for austerity! But no, it was only a temporary technical reorganisation; people's consumerism (if only, at the moment, for a privileged Dantonesque élite) was still on. Still, hope may yet come again—if what Khrushchev called "goulash-Communism" fails in Hungary, or if the Pope's influence in Poland turns the flock ascetically away from this-worldly materialism, or if some natural catastrophe (a flood, an earthquake, a plague) subverts all the ambitious Five-Year-Plans from the Elbe to the Urals . . . and Harich will return, his unbesmirched Party book and passport in his hand again.

I can remember not being able to make up my mind, some 30 years ago in Berlin when I first met (and argued with) Harich, whether the clever young man was cynical or naive when he crossed from West to East to take his stand with Bolshevism. The dispirited older man is still surely both. The cynicism holds that the worse things are the better they will be. The naiveté protects a last lingering faith that, despite "errors", the Movement and the Party and the Revolution are indestructibly right, for History is on their side.

WHEN Harich was serving his prison sentence in Bautzen he is said to have won certain "special favours" for himself by "betraying" one of the old Communists with whom he had distributed that ill-starred heretical Manifesto of 1956. These are the familiar stories of political prison life, and are alas more often true than not. But I still raised an eyebrow when the West German press, with no evident fear of libel, reported it in these recent days, *Die Welt* most bitterly (its Editor happened also to be a veteran of the same prison), the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* most comprehensively, naming names. The "betrayed comrade" involved was Walter Janka, who is still alive and is clearly the source of the story of his denunciation. Here is Harich's full reply to the charges:

> HARICH: Not a word is true.
>
> *—The why didn't you, as you announced you would, go ahead and sue Biermann? [Wolf Biermann, the East German poet and ballad-singer who had been "expelled" to the West, had on the basis of the Janka information publicy denounced Harich.]*
>
> HARICH: Because I could only have brought rather minor charges of slanderous insult against Biermann, and not libel, for Biermann had not libelled me, he had only been quoting.
>
> *—Quoting Janka?*
>
> HARICH: Yes, Janka and Havemann. [Robert Havemann, the East Berlin Marxist dissident who has been under close house arrest for years and is now on trial.] After what Biermann had published I myself wrote to Janka who still lives in the *DDR* and asked for a meeting. He made no reply. His wife told me on the telephone: Let the man in peace, it all has nothing to do with him. I ask you—should I in the *DDR* try and sue my former fellow-prisoner Janka and Havemann?

Unconvincing stuff, this. After a lifetime of dialectics and rationalisation on behalf of Stalinist monstrosities, he has little power of persuasion left, and few enough convictions.

If we are to believe him—this one last time—it is Nature (not the Masses) that he truly loves, and the barricades are still worth mounting—not for human rights, but for the power to defend the natural rights of the little hills and valleys. Instead of the *Vozhd* Wolfgang Harich has now come to love a tree.

Behind him lies the ill-fared land where power accumulates and men decay.

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LETTERS

Minogue and "Political Literacy"

IN KENNETH MINOGUE'S article in ENCOUNTER (June), "Can One Teach 'Political Literacy'?", there are certainly some ideas to be applauded. He is surely right to be sceptical about the educational value of much that once passed, in schools, as "Civics". But it is really a little pedantic of him to cavil at the use of the phrase "political literacy" in Bernard Crick and Alex Porter (eds.), *Political Education and Literacy*—without attempting to come up himself with a good alternative title. Moreover, the whole thrust of his argument suggests that he accepts two propositions which are both highly questionable. *First*, that there is no very grave problem posed by most people's astonishing ignorance about prominent political personalities, particularly those of their own country—leaving on one side what these same personalities stand for, and any great detail about the parties they lead or elementary political theory as such. And *second*, that the whole attempt to include instruction on political affairs in the school curriculum is, at best, marginal in its effects for good or ill, at worst, positively harmful.

However, there is an important question posed by Mr Minogue's loaded way of treating the issue of political education. Why, just because a subject may be badly taught in some or even in many schools, is it to be regarded as unteachable? Can it be that, because he finds freshmen students grossly ignorant on political affairs generally, he almost instinctively jumps to the conclusion that they actually *ought* to be presented to him by their schools as *tabulae rasae*?

If Mr Minogue imagines that this can be done, he is, in many cases, ignoring the elementary facts of human intellectual development. For no student of either sex, who is interested and able enough to enrol for study in Political Science at a university or polytechnic, will have attained to the age of 18 without having acquired some fairly well-entrenched views on politics—views which teachers of the subject may often find it difficult to take very seriously, based as they may well be on faulty or plainly erroneous preconceptions. After all, it is very easy, for a teacher at almost any level beyond the primary, sometimes to confuse plain ignorance with flawed understanding.

Mr Minogue could perhaps counter this argument with some such remark as this: "Well, of course, schools should encourage their pupils to acquire knowledge of Political Science; but, for those whose cast of mind does not induce them to embark upon such studies, knowledge of political affairs acquired at school is neither necessary nor desirable."

That *may* be his intention; but, if only because his primary purpose is evidently to discredit the Crick/Porter Report on Political Literacy, it is not at all clear whether Mr Minogue thinks of Political Science in schools as being intended only for a committed élite—or whether he has any proposals to offer about inducing teenaged schoolchildren, who are not going to specialise in Political Science, none the less to take an interest in the political process as such, in the way it operates in their own society and, in much more general terms, in other parts of the world as well.

Something surely needs to be done to improve the present situation of truly lamentable ignorance of all things political displayed by the average teenaged boy or girl who is not destined to be a Political Science specialist. If Mr Minogue thinks it is sufficient merely to heap scorn on the Crick/Porter Report—which, at the least, has made *some* attempt to remedy a situation which could prove dangerous for the future of democracy in this country—then I feel bound to say that, in this regard, he is displaying a culpable lack of responsibility.

PERHAPS THE BEST SOLUTION, which would admittedly take some years to show its best effect, would be for universities and polytechnics, and in particular the Political Science departments within them, to encourage their brightest graduates in that subject, who subsequently also distinguish themselves in their examinations for the Master's Degree, to become schoolteachers themselves and to train their colleagues, who show an aptitude for the subject, but who are not qualified in Political Science, for a subsidiary yet still important role in the teaching of that subject at school.

There is really no other way of countering ignorance in matters political, as in other subject areas, except by the judicious imparting of information. When such information is available, it ought to be transmitted from teacher to pupil; otherwise, the intellectual void will inevitably be filled by the kind of prejudice which Mr Minogue rightly deplores.

ROBERT A. IMLAY

London

LET ME FIRST SAY that my "primary purpose" was not to "discredit" what Mr Imlay calls "the Crick/Porter Report"; nor was I concerned to "heap" scorn on it. And if my way of treating the issue was "loaded", Mr Imlay gives no hint of how. What I actually did was to criticise the proposal to teach "political literacy" on the grounds that the problem was illusory and the educational value of the solution negligible. Mr Imlay makes no attempt to defend the solution, but claims that I am not taking the problem seriously.

And, indeed, I am not. Secondary schools do not have so much slack time that, having grounded their pupils in English, Maths and Science, languages and other genuinely educational subjects, they must then search out new subjects to fill the time. I argued that in any case the pedagogic situation of a teacher instructing a class is about the least suitable way imaginable of acquainting people with politics. But most of all, I do not believe that the political ignorance which Mr Imlay finds so lamentable need worry us very much really. Lots of people in Britain are profoundly bored by politics. Lots of politics is in fact rather boring. Ought we to encourage *everyone* to take an interest in it? Millions of people actually do take such an interest, and the addition of more is hardly likely to increase greatly the wisdom and skill with which the British government is conducted.

I do not think I am displaying "a culpable lack of responsibility" in refusing to be disturbed by a problem

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which for the most part affects only politicians in search of an audience. There is no "intellectual void" in the minds of the young, waiting to be filled by "the judicious imparting of information." The heads of the young are full enough of the things that interest them, and the information (as well as the current political fashions) which they learn at school will as often as not be out-of-date by the time they come to vote. For the field of *haute couture* is a model of changeless stability compared to what the politically sophisticated take for granted.

Politics used in the past to be conducted by a tiny minority of the population. Fundamentally it still is, though everyone now has the opportunity to take part if he or she should choose. That is an improvement. Beyond that point, however. I cannot think of any practical political problem that would be solved if Britain could boast those farcical 99% voter turnouts of other less fortunate countries. If anything, the reverse.

KENNETH MINOGUE

London

The End of "An Adventure"?

MY ATTENTION has been drawn, belatedly I fear, to an article by the late Dame Joan Evans on the Moberly-Jourdain "Adventure" in your publication of October 1976, because it refers to my book *The Ghosts of Versailles* (1957). On reading it, I find that the main point (viz. that the mystery of *An Adventure* has been conclusively solved for all time) is open to question, and the argument contains inner contradictions. However, I write concerning three inaccuracies of a personal nature, and I am grateful for the opportunity of correcting them.

On pages 23–4 of *The Ghosts of Versailles* I wrote, "A direct ancestor of mine had been one of the King's most intimate courtiers and friends", and added that his life and the lives of his two unmarried sisters

> "were saved . . . by a certain nobleman, a Creole with property in the West Indies: thanks to him my great-great-grandfather was able to escape to the French colony of Sainte Domingue, with his family. The nobleman's name was the Comte de Vaudreuil."

I am at a loss to understand how, on reading this, Dame Joan was able to make her assertion that the Comte de Vaudreuil was my ancestor—an assertion distressing to me since the Comte de Vaudreuil was a disreputable character, whereas my own ancestors, the de Noailles, were of deservedly unsullied reputation.

Dame Joan asserts that my chapter "The Sceptic" is an expression of my own point of view. I have never been in the habit of concealing my point of view when I wished to put it forward; and here Dame Joan is contradicted by her own acknowledgment that I also offered for consideration the Dieppe Raid Case. I inserted this precisely so as to allow my readers to examine a better supported case of the kind, while not, of course, committing myself, since I have always been an unbiased observer.

Dame Joan implies (p. 42, in a footnote) that I intentionally left my readers with the impression that Miss Jourdain committed suicide. I had not in fact heard, as she suggests I had, that she died from a coronary thrombosis. Nor was I aware that there were—and still are—those of the opinion that she committed suicide. The facts, as I have since been given them on unimpeachable authority, are that Miss Jourdain died on the night of the day on which the Secretary of the Council of St Hugh's College, Oxford, conveyed to her the Chancellor's verdict after his investigations as Visitor into the total disintegration of the College under her principalship, with its implication that she must resign or be dismissed.

I much regret that I was not able to write this while Dame Joan was still alive.

LUCILLE IREMONGER

London

Intellectual Debate

IT WAS SIGNIFICANT, if unintentional, that the piece by Goronwy Rees (ENCOUNTER, October 1978) occupied the spot usually filled by the Story since it was an interesting fictive exercise. I do subscribe to the theory that intellectual reviews and intellectual activity is the life-blood of a progressive society but I do have certain requirements of intellectuals. In the first place, for an argument to be convincing or substantive it has to be rooted in some sort of objectively verifiable reality. Mr Rees's piece floated in Cloud-cuckoo-land where verification of the argument was as about as likely as a duff bottle of scotch mist. His article was peppered with such familiar terms as "the intellectual", "the ordinary man", "the young" and other well-used dramatis personae. I looked in vain for one single piece of datum in this article. There was nothing remotely related to old father datum. It was, in fact, a series of familiar clichés both unprovable and unconvincing. We intellectuals in the "Eng.lit." stable do, at least, make some attempt to teach students that an argument has no validity when based on opinion only and backed up by generalisations. If we are guilty of what Mr Rees accuses us (viz. irrelevance to the needs of the students) at least my students would graduate from university with an understanding of what is required to make an argument hold water: facts. Let me indicate some of the areas in which Mr Rees's article is deficient.

He writes of the 19th century and the prestige of intellectual activity then without mentioning a single writer or journal which would fit into his category, and he speaks of the availability of the works of the intellectual to the "ordinary man." Again he offers no indication of how or where this ordinary chap would come across this material he speaks of.

Later he talks of the "almost total freedom of expression now allowed to writers and intellectuals in the West." He might consult some of these intellectuals and ask them how much difficulty they have finding a publisher for material that does not toe the establishment line. He might consult Professor Robert Moore of Aberdeen University and ask what happened to his agreement with Penguin Books and their commission to write a book on Race. Or any number of Fleet Street journalists who cannot get their papers to run stories because they are too controversial.

Later in the article he speaks of the young of the '60s who, so he says, dreamed of an alternative or counter-culture then, and in whose minds the dream of a counter-culture lives on. Where, in the name of reasoned discussion, does he find his evidence for such statements? Oh, I met a chap in "The Flask" in Hampstead once who fitted that description, I'm sure we all have, but it is not on such slender evidence that intellectual debate is founded.

If the editorial board of ENCOUNTER is going to offer

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an apologia for its existence on the grounds that it is to be in the forefront of intellectual debate for the next, as for the past, 25 years then it will have to prove its intellectual worth rather more convincingly.

MARK RALPH-BOWMAN

Department of English
Bayero University
Kano, Nigeria

Sinai, Science & Doom

THANK YOU for returning my manuscript on "Science, Technology and Development."

I was saddened by the publication of the article by I. Robert Sinai with its "Club of Rome, doom ridden" analysis and you were ashamed enough to make an apology in introducing it. However, when you get a chance to publish a piece which both tries to build a balanced picture and assumes educated people should be informed about the real and positive role of science and technology and its benefits and risks today, you bilk at it.

Please pass this letter to your circulation department as notice of my cancelling my subscription.

DR T. CRAIG SINCLAIR

Square Prevost-Delaunay
Brussels

The Case of Kreisky

COULD IT BE POSSIBLE that Robert Wistrich's article [ENCOUNTER, May] was meant to influence the elections in Austria? Anyway, the results of the elections prove again the sagacity of the Austrian People who gave Bruno Kreisky his most decisive victory so far. The Austrian Chancellor's honesty and statesmanship have carried his reputation far beyond what one would normally expect of a leader from a relatively small and politically neutral country.

He has become an international figure on his own, and it is no exaggeration to say that he is the most respected European Leader among the educated in the Third World.

S. O. HASHIM

Washington, D.C.

"Musical Memoirs"

MAY I MAKE a small correction to the "author's note" (Boris Goldovsky, "Musical Memoirs", ENCOUNTER, June)? I do still reside in a suburb of Boston, but it has been some sixteen years since I taught at Tanglewood. In the winter months I head the Opera Department at the Curtis Institute of Music in Philadelphia; I also have a studio in New York and lecture regularly at the Museum of Fine Arts. I spend my summers doing opera workshops (Southeastern Massachusetts University, and Ogleby Park, West Virginia).

BORIS GOLDOVSKY

Brookline
Mass

AUTHORS

Tom Paulin is a Lecturer in English at the University of Nottingham. He is the author of *Thomas Hardy: The Poetry of Perception* (Macmillan, 1976) and a book of poems, *A State of Justice* (Faber, 1977).

Ruthven Todd was a Scottish poet who lived for many years in the United States and on Mallorca. His *Selected Poems, Garland for the Winter Solstice*, were published in 1962 (Dent, and Little Brown).

Peter Reading's fourth book of poems, *Fiction*, was published recently by Secker & Warburg.

David Cannadine is a Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, where he is Lecturer and Director of Studies in History. His book *Lords and Landlords: The Aristocracy and the Towns 1775–1967* will be published next year by Leicester University Press.

Jürgen Busche is an editor of the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*.

François Bondy is an editor of the monthly *Schweizer Monatshefte* and of *Die Weltwoche* (Zurich).

Friedrich Luft is a leading German theatre and film critic. He lives in Berlin and writes regularly for *Die Welt* (Bonn).

Since his release from prison **Milovan Djilas** has been living in Belgrade as a free-lance writer.

Philip Larkin's most recent book of poems is *High Windows* (Faber, 1974). He edited *The Oxford Book of Twentieth Century English Verse* (1973). His essay on contemporary literary manuscripts, "A Neglected Responsibility", appeared in the July 1979 ENCOUNTER.

Laurence Lerner is Professor of English at the University of Sussex. His critical book *Love and Marriage* is about to be published by Edward Arnold, and his next book of poems, *The Man I Killed*, is due from Secker & Warburg in 1980.

D. J. Enright is a poet, literary critic, and novelist, and has held various Chairs of English Literature abroad. He was from 1970–72 co-editor of ENCOUNTER, and is now a director of Chatto & Windus, who published his most recent volume of poems, *Paradise Illustrated*, in 1978.

Kenneth Minogue is Reader in Political Science at the London School of Economics, and author of *Nationalism* (1976) and *The Concept of a University* (Weidenfeld 1972).

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Life & Letters Today

London

ME THERAPIST, YOU PIMP: *The Protection of Prostitutes Bill was introduced in the House of Commons last week by Ms Maureen Colquhoun. It is something of a triumph for the growing and vocal prostitutes' lobby as well as for its formidable spokesperson, Helen Buckingham.*

Ms Buckingham has campaigned tirelessly for the past four years to decriminalise prostitution and has herself been "on the game" for about seven years. She is a large woman with complete mastery of the monologue and very concerned about her public image.

In 1975 Ms Buckingham launched PUSSI (Prostitutes United for Social and Sexual Integration), which was later converted into the more anodyne PLAN (Prostitute Laws Are Nonsense).

"We want to be seen as competent, mature people who act as sex therapists and answer a social need. We provide an alternative to women peddling desperation. That's quite a good quote."

"There are no emotional problems with us. We stop men getting tangled up with their secretaries or their best friends' wives. No, the men don't get involved ever. The act of paying out money stops that. It's the state that's the biggest pimp of them all."

Parliamentarians believe the Bill hasn't a hope, since it must join a vast queue of other private members' Bills to get a second reading.

Ms Buckingham is undaunted. "We have to keep on fighting. It's respect we want, here. Don't put your notebook away. For too many men we have been an optical rape; a rape in the mind."

THE OBSERVER

New York City

NOVEL STORE: A US computer peripherals manufacturer yesterday announced its first disc drive memory unit capable of storing more than 1bn characters of information.

The unit, developed by Memorex, occupies one square metre of floor space. It contains two separate magnetic disc spindles, each with a capacity of 635m bytes, or computer characters. Together they can store the equivalent of 3,000 novels.

FINANCIAL TIMES

Birmingham

HANDWRITING-ON-THE-WALL: *"Razor Jim", the graffiti artist, caused uproar at a large factory. His scrawlings insulted women workers and accused wives of being unfaithful. When the husbands of the women named in the graffiti threatened violence, the factory bosses decided to track the phantom scribbler down.*

They brought in their own Sherlock Holmes—a handwriting expert, Mr Ian Renshaw. He studied the walls then looked at handwriting on a company document and said firmly: "That's your man".

The man who was identified as Razor Jim, 19-year-old Donald Zafar Ali, a trainee tool-setter, was asked to resign, and then sacked for gross misconduct. And yesterday an industrial tribunal at Birmingham rejected his appeal that the sacking was unfair.

The tribunal, two women and a man, studied photographs of the lavatory walls and heard evidence from Mr Renshaw, formerly of the Home Office forensic science department. They also heard that desperate bosses had even left their own messages in the lavatories—telling the scribbler that he faced the sack.

That, the tribunal ruled, meant that the company had complied with the Government's code of industrial practice by giving final warnings.

Mr Ronald Edwards, personnel director at the factory, told the tribunal: "We know the writer saw our warnings. In a second series of writings which doubted the parentage of the works manager, the writer said, 'If he thinks he is going to catch me he has got another think coming'."

But Mr Ali, of Harborne, Birmingham, claimed he was not the author of the writings at all. He told the tribunal an enemy must have tried to imitate his handwriting.

DAILY MAIL

Washington D.C.

TAXING WORDS: In its continuing effort to make its tax forms more intelligible, the American Internal Revenue Service fed some samples to a computer that had been instructed to "red-flag" words that would be too difficult for the general public to understand.

Among the words and terms that the computer disliked were: "Spouse", "Deduction", "Taxpayer", "Social Security" and "Internal Revenue Service."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Athens

DIET: *At the opening of the Assembly the President of Greece made a gracious and appropriate speech of welcome, at the Odeon of Herod Atticus. This was followed by an ungracious and inappropriate "Keynote Address" by Mr Ferdinand Mayor, a deputy director-general of UNESCO.*

This discourse necessarily smacked of its place of origin, but it did contain one new word—at least it was new to me [Conor Cruise O'Brien writes]. This was the word "over-informed": "sur-informé."

Just as there are people who are overfed so there are, it seems, people who are over informed, intellectually bloated people. Clearly such people need to be put on some sort of diet—in official Unescan, "free and balanced flow of information"—so that they get just the right kind of information, in just the right quantity.

UNESCO is the right body to prescribe and supervise such a diet. After all, most of its member-Governments have been regulating, rationing and filtering the news for years.

THE OBSERVER

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